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Dante's Divine  
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THE DIVINE COMEDY  
OF  
DANTE ALIGHIERI

CARY'S TRANSLATION, REVISED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
MARIE-LOUISE EGERTON CASTLE



LONDON  
G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.

1914



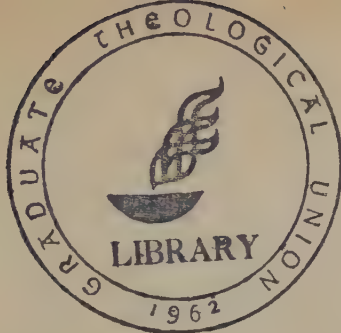
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*IT is generally better to read ten lines of any poet in the original language, however painfully, than ten cantos of a translation. But an exception may be made in favour of Cary's Dante. If no poet ever was liable to lose more in translation, none was ever so carefully translated, and I hardly know whether most to admire the rigid fidelity, or the sweet and solemn harmony of Cary's verse.*

*RUSKIN.*



## INTRODUCTION

IN the *Divine Comedy*, Dante lays bare his soul. It seems to us when we read the marvellous pages, as though we had spoken with the poet himself, as though our mortal eyes had watched his face quivering with his scorn of evil, had seen it grow tender when he looked on innocence. It is the proof of his stupendous genius that he has still the power to move us, who live a life so widely different from his own. Whatever our creed may be, whatever may be our ideals, we must weep when he weeps, we must burn with his indignation. Leaning across the years he can touch us with his finger.

The immortality of Dante's work is due, not so much to the witching beauty of his style, which no translation can ever render, as to his grip on humanity.

"*Greift nur hinein ins volle Menschenleben,*" says Goethe.

"*Und wo Ihr's packt da ist's interessant.*"

This is the secret of Dante's power. He plucked the very heart out of the living folk around him ; that heart still throbs in his verse. Men grow old and die, but humanity does not change.

The writings of Dante afford a complete record of his life. The *Vita Nuova* is the history of the love of his youth ; the miscellaneous poems relate his movements during the time which elapsed between the death of Beatrice and the commencement of his banishment. The *Divine Comedy* is so exact a chronicle of his later doings, that it has been possible, from references in the work, to trace his wanderings and know for certain

what roads were trodden by his exiled feet. This precious manuscript, his *magnum opus*, was his only confidant. It is very much more than an account of his Vision of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise: it is almost a diary. He drew his similes from what he saw as he journeyed along the lonely perilous ways. The memories of green hills and running streams which haunt the thirsty souls in Hell are Dante's memories of his own travels. His thanks to those great lords who received the wanderer with courtesy are set forth in the same pages, likewise his ineffaceable grudge against those who wounded his pride. His philosophical and political ideals are revealed in the *Divine Comedy* almost as fully as in his treatises.

Moreover, the poem contains a wonderful gallery of portraits. Three lines from this master hand, and the portrait is there for all time, splendid in its strength, in its individuality, whether the background be the shores of Phlegethon or the woods of Eden.

Brunetto Latini, still the gentle scholar, though he treads the sands of Hell; Filippo Argenti, "that weird Florentine spirit," rending himself in one of his wonted fits of ungovernable temper, as he wallows in the mud of Styx; Belacqua, the guitar maker, hugging his knees in a dream of laziness on the slopes of Purgatory—all these portraits and many more testify to the power of the great impressionist.

But, for the benefit of those who have neither time nor inclination to trace Dante's history through all his works, it is well to gather together the principal facts in a short space.

Dante was the son of Alighiero di Bellincione degli Alighieri, a Guelf notary of good family and moderate income. The mother died soon after the birth of the child, and the widower married again. This is all that is known of the poet's early days, until his first meeting with Beatrice.

Dante was only nine years old when he met her, and she was a little younger. He was playing with others of his age at a May-day feast in the house of her father.

When Dante saw the pretty child, demure and grave beyond her years, clad in a straight little narrow gown of crimson, his heart went out to her in an innocent rapture. In that unforgettable hour began the love which sanctified his whole life, a love so pure and mystic that it is without a parallel in the history of humanity. The devotion, sown that May-day in the boy's mind, grew as he grew, increasing as his intellect developed, until Beatrice became to him the symbol of all beauty, of all holiness.

It seems a strange and wonderful thing to us that a man should consecrate all the love of his soul to a woman whom he could look upon but seldom—as he chanced to meet her in the street, or in church, or at the house of a friend—a woman of whom he asked nothing more than a salutation or a kind word. In those days it was not so unusual. Many men of that century enthroned another's wife as queen of their heart and served her in the fear of God. Yet never has history known so ethereal a passion as Dante's. The young Florentine matron held the heart of this mighty genius in the hollow of her hand. When she was gracious and smiled at him, he seemed to touch the uttermost bounds of bliss. If she denied him her greeting, he fell into an agony.

Whether he had ever wished to marry her, and whether the curious nature of his love would have been changed by the dear household bonds and everyday companionship, becoming at once an earthlier and a happier thing—these are but matters for conjecture.

There can be no doubt that Beatrice was a real woman. The whole tenor of Dante's verse proclaims it beyond a doubt, even had we no further evidence. But we do know a few facts about her, and these facts are very well authenticated. She was a daughter of Folco Portinari, a wealthy citizen. In 1286 she married a certain Simone dei Bardi, and she died after four years of wedlock.

Dante was frenzied with grief at her death. For nearly two years he kept himself in absolute seclusion,

devoting himself to philosophic studies, and to the compilation of that first memorial to Beatrice,—the *Vita Nuova*. This exquisite little book consists of all the lyrics which the poet wrote in praise of his lady, strung together like so many jewels on a golden thread of prose.

It was in order to rouse him from his melancholy that his kinsfolk arranged his marriage with Gemma Donati. Dante seems to have entered matrimony in a mood of complete indifference. He certainly did not love his wife, for never in all his writing does he mention her, nor the five children she bore him. Gemma seems to have been a good woman, but she was, of course, no intellectual companion for the arrogant and passionate man of genius with whom Fate had mated her.

For a while after his marriage Dante plunged himself into dissipations unworthy of so great a soul. His wife's cousin, Forese Donati, exerted the worst influence over him, an influence so strong that for the moment the poet seems to have forgotten Beatrice and his high ideals. Dante was not one, however, to tolerate the mire for long. He soon returned to his austere life, and all his days he was haunted by remorse for this sinful time.

Immediately following the reaction comes the period of Dante's political activity. Florence was in those days the centre of strife. Both the Roman Emperor and the Pope of Rome were stretching greedy hands to lay hold of the wealthy little city. Florence herself was distracted by contending factions. There were the Ghibellines, who fought for the Emperor, and their enemies the Guelfs, who upheld the temporal supremacy of the Pope. There were two sub-divisions of these parties, the Whites who represented democracy, the Blacks who were adherents of the Ghibellines and supported the old aristocratic tyranny.

Dante entered the municipal council nominally as a White, but he was very moderate in his views. He really belonged to no party in particular. Although by birth a Guelf and by conviction a devout son of the Church, he strenuously resisted the temporal power of



the Pope. Democratic at heart, he yet had the profoundest veneration for the Imperial throne.

On 15th June 1300, he was elected prior, and his masterful personality at once put him at the head of affairs. During four momentous months every move that Florence made was dictated by Dante. It was he who hurled defiance at the ambitious Boniface; it was he who exiled the leaders both of the Blacks and the Whites in the vain hope of obtaining peace.

Corso Donati, the banished chief of the Blacks, hied him to Rome, and he and Boniface laid their heads together for the destruction of the valiant Tuscan republic. The Pope changed his tactics altogether, feigned the utmost friendliness to Florence, and proposed to send Charles of Valois as "peacemaker" to the city.

Dante and his colleagues were aghast at the suggestion. They knew well enough what Boniface's "peacemaker" meant. But they resolved to meet the Pope on his own ground, and they dispatched a diplomatic embassy to Rome. Here, again, it was Dante who hurried to the Holy City and prostrated himself before the papal throne to implore that Florence might at least be spared foreign intervention.

That was perhaps the one false step that Dante made. By his absence he left the state without a head. While he was in Rome, Charles of Valois presented himself before the walls of Florence. Had Dante been there, he would, no doubt, have spurred the city to resistance. As it was, the citizens listened to the Frenchman's fair words, and opened their gates to his army. Once within the town, Charles threw off the mask of friendship. The Blacks rushed to arms and joined his standard. Then began such scenes of plunder, murder, and fire, as had never been known before even in the stormy annals of Tuscany.

Charles and his creatures began their rule by pronouncing sentences of exile and confiscation on those whom they deemed dangerous opponents. Naturally, one of the first of those upon whom their vengeance fell, was Dante.

Thus did it happen that the poet, hurrying homeward at the news of the disaster, was checked at Siena by the tidings that he was henceforth an exile and a beggar.

For a long time Dante did not lose hope of returning to his beloved city. He joined the armies of banished Whites, and took part in several encounters with his own countrymen. But every attempt failed, and the gates of Florence remained inexorably closed.

Once, indeed, the heart of the poet was warmed by a great hope. The Emperor Albert of Austria was succeeded in the year 1308 by his nephew Henry of Luxemburg. The new Cæsar started his reign as an Apostle of Peace. He commenced a journey round his Empire, endeavouring to reconcile conflicting parties, to force cities to take back their exiles, to govern all his dominions in a happy unity.

Breathlessly Dante watched the progress of these schemes. Success at first seemed to wait upon the Emperor, but a few towns remained defiant and unyielding; among them was Florence. And before Henry could bring the city of flowers to submission he sickened of a fever and died in the autumn of 1313.

With him died the last of Dante's hopes. Henceforth the poet wandered over the face of Italy, a broken-hearted man. From time to time he accepted the hospitality of some great lord, dwelling beneath the stranger's roof for a while, and eating the bread of charity in bitterness of spirit. But he could not long endure the restrictions of these petty courts, and he soon went forth to resume his travels. He was grown strange, and dark minded, chary of words, biting in his sarcasm when he did speak, full of scorn for the world's meanness, yet withal full of enthusiasm in any noble cause.

On these wanderings, Dante carried his manuscript with him, and day by day added to the precious scroll. "This is the work," he says, "which has made me lean for many years." The gradual etherealisation of his mind is shown in the development of the Epic.

The thirty-three terrible cantos of the *Inferno* were written when Dante's own soul was passing through a

veritable hell-fire of anger, hatred, and pain, during the early part of his exile.

The tender verses of the *Purgatorio* belong to the time when his spirit was rising above the sorrow and sin of the world to find consolation in religion.

The *Paradiso* belongs to that last period of his life when he had entered into an unearthly peace. He had climbed the Holy Mountain, and standing there on the cold and lonely peak, he looked down at the hurrying throng in the valleys. Here his soul knew strange communion with his long dead love. And when Death came to him, it was in no unknown or terrifying guise. Beatrice took him by the hand and led him into the pearl-pale heaven of his dream.

It was only quite at the end of his life that Dante found a permanent resting-place. Guido da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, offered him a refuge in a manner so honourable and friendly, that even the haughty poet found nothing to resent.

Here Dante spent a few happy years before his death, still working at the *Commedia* and lecturing to a small body of students who clustered round the master. But the cruel fate which had pursued him all his life would not allow him to end his days in peace. One last crushing disappointment was in store for him.

A disagreement arose between Ravenna and Venice. The powerful sea-republic threatened to pour its armies into the land of Dante's patron, and ruin stared Guido in the face. The poet, who cleaved with all his generous soul to the one man whom he called friend, came forward at this juncture and offered his services to the Count of Polenta. He was conscious, as genius must always be, of his own greatness. He thought that if he went as ambassador to Venice, he with his powerful arguments, his eloquence and logic would be able to make terms of peace and avert the impending disaster.

It was with these high hopes that Dante set off by sea to the Doge's court. But in a little while he returned to Ravenna, along the pestilence-haunted shore, broken-hearted, fever-stricken, with scarce the strength to

speak his evil tidings to his friend. The Venetians had received the embassy with scorn, had heaped insults upon Dante, and had even refused him the safe and wholesome return journey across their sea.

Dante never lifted his head again. This last sorrow—a sorrow for another—had crushed him utterly. He did not live to see the war cloud break in ruin upon Ravenna. He passed but a few fevered days upon the bed in his great stone-walled, tapestry-hung chamber in Guido's palace; then his mighty spirit was set free on the 14th of September 1321, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.



# CHRONOLOGICAL VIEW

## OF

# THE AGE OF DANTE

A.D.

1265 May.—DANTE, son of Alighieri degli Alighieri and Bella, is born at Florence. Of his own ancestry he speaks in the *Paradiso*, Cantos xv. and xvi.

In the same year, Manfredi, King of Naples and Sicily, is defeated and slain by Charles of Anjou. *Inf.* xxviii. 13, and *Purg.* iii. 110.

Guido Novello of Polenta obtains the sovereignty of Ravenna. *Inf.* xxvii. 38.

Battle of Evesham. Simon de Montfort, leader of the barons, defeated and slain.

1266 Two of the Frati Godenti chosen arbitrators of the differences of Florence. *Inf.* xxiii. 104.

Gianni de' Soldanieri heads the populace in that city. *Inf.* xxxii. 118.

Roger Bacon sends a copy of his *Opus Majus* to Pope Clement iv.

1268 Charles of Anjou puts Conradino to death, and becomes King of Naples. *Inf.* xxviii. 16, and *Purg.* xx. 66.

1270 Louis ix. of France dies before Tunis. His widow, Margaret, daughter of Raymond Berenger, lived till 1295. *Purg.* vii. 129. *Par.* vi. 135.

1272 Henry iii. of England is succeeded by Edward i. *Purg.* vii. 129.

A.D.

- 1272 Guy de Montfort murders Prince Henry, son of Richard, King of the Romans, and nephew of Henry III. of England, at Viterbo. Inf. xii. 119. Richard dies, as is supposed, of grief for this event.  
Abulfeda, the Arabic writer, is born.
- 1274 Our Poet first sees Beatrice, daughter of Folco Portinari.  
Rudolph acknowledged emperor.  
Philip III. of France marries Mary of Brabant, who lived till 1321. Purg. vi. 24.  
Thomas Aquinas dies. Purg. xx. 67, and Par. x. 96.  
Buonaventura dies. Par. xii. 25.
- 1275 Pierre de la Brosse, secretary to Philip III. of France, executed. Purg. vi. 23.
- 1276 Giotto, the painter, is born. Purg. xi. 95.  
Pope Adrian v. dies. Purg. xix. 97.  
Guido Guinicelli, the poet, dies. Purg. xi. 96, and xxvi. 83.
- 1277 Pope John XXI. dies. Par. xii. 126.
- 1278 Ottocar, King of Bohemia, dies. Purg. vii. 97.  
Robert of Gloucester is living at this time.
- 1279 Diniz succeeds to the throne of Portugal. Par. xix. 135.
- 1280 Albertus Magnus dies. Par. x. 95.  
Our Poet's friend, Busone da Gubbio, is born about this time.  
William of Ockham is born about this time.
- 1281 Pope Nicholas III. dies. Inf. xix. 71.  
Dante studies at the universities of Bologna and Padua.  
About this time Ricordano Malaspina, the Florentine annalist, dies.
- 1282 The Sicilian vespers. Par. viii. 80.  
The French defeated by the people of Forli. Inf. xxvii. 41.  
Tribaldello de' Manfredi betrays the city of Faenza. Inf. xxxii. 119.
- 1284 Prince Charles of Anjou is defeated and made

A.D.

- 1284 prisoner by Ruggier de Lauria, admiral to Peter III. of Arragon. *Purg.* xx. 78.  
 Charles I., King of Naples, dies. *Purg.* vii. 111.  
 Alonzo x. of Castile, dies. He caused the Bible to be translated into Castilian, and all legal instruments to be drawn up in that language. Sancho iv. succeeds him.  
 Philip (next year iv. of France) marries Jane, daughter of Henry of Navarre. *Purg.* vii. 102.
- 1285 Pope Martin iv. dies. *Purg.* xxiv. 23.  
 Philip III. of France and Peter III. of Arragon die. *Purg.* vii. 101 and 110.  
 Henry II., King of Cyprus, comes to the throne. *Par.* xix. 144.  
 Simon Memmi, the painter, celebrated by Petrarch, is born.
- 1287 Guido dalle Colonne (mentioned by Dante in his *De Vulgari Eloquentiâ*) writes "The War of Troy."  
 Pope Honorius iv. dies.
- 1288 Hakon, King of Norway, makes war on Denmark. *Par.* xix. 135.  
 Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi dies of famine. *Inf.* xxxiii. 14.  
 The Scottish poet, Thomas Learmouth, commonly called Thomas the Rhymer, is living at this time.
- 1289 Dante is in the battle of Campaldino, where the Florentines defeat the people of Arezzo, June 11. *Purg.* v. 90.
- 1290 Beatrice dies. *Purg.* xxxii. 2.  
 He serves in the war waged by the Florentines upon the Pisans, and is present at the surrender of Caprona in the autumn. *Inf.* xxi. 92.  
 Guido dalle Colonne dies.  
 William, Marquis of Montferrat, is made prisoner by his traitorous subjects at Alessandria in Lombardy. *Purg.* vii. 133.  
 Michael Scot dies. *Inf.* xx. 115.
- 1291 Dante marries Gemma de' Donati, with whom he

A.D.

- 1291 lives unhappily. By this marriage he had five sons and a daughter.  
 Can Grande della Scala is born, March 9. Inf. i. 98 ;  
 Purg. xx. 16 ; Par. xvii. 75, and xxvii. 135.  
 The renegade Christians assist the Saracens to recover St. John D'Acre. Inf. xxvii. 84.  
 The Emperor Rudolph dies. Purg. vi. 104, and vii. 91.  
 Alonzo III. of Arragon dies, and is succeeded by James II. Purg. vii. 113, and Par. xix. 133.  
 Eleanor, widow of Henry III. dies. Par. vi. 135.
- 1292 Pope Nicholas IV. dies.  
 Roger Bacon dies.  
 John Baliol, King of Scotland, crowned.
- 1294 Clement V. abdicates the papal chair. Inf. iii. 56.  
 Dante writes his *Vita Nuova*.  
 Fra Guittone d'Arezzo, the poet, dies. Purg. xxiv. 56.  
 Andrea Taffi, of Florence, the worker in Mosaic, dies.
- 1295 Dante's preceptor, Brunetto Latini, dies. Inf. xv. 28.  
 Charles Martel, King of Hungary, visits Florence. Par. viii. 57, and dies in the same year.  
 Frederick, son of Peter III. of Arragon, becomes King of Sicily. Purg. vii. 117, and Par. xix. 127.  
 Taddeo, the physician of Florence, called the Hippocratean, dies. Par. xii. 77.  
 Marco Polo, the traveller, returns from the East to Venice.  
 Ferdinand IV. of Castile comes to the throne. Par. xix. 122.
- 1296 Forese, the companion of Dante, dies. Purg. xxxiii. 44.  
 Sadi, the most celebrated of the Persian writers, dies.  
 War between England and Scotland, which terminates in the submission of the Scots to Edward I. ; but in the following year, Sir William Wallace attempts the deliverance of Scotland. Par. xix. 121.

A.D.

- 1298 The Emperor Adolph falls in a battle with his rival, Albert I., who succeeds him in the Empire. Purg. vi. 98.

Jacopo da Varagine, Archbishop of Genoa, author of the *Legenda Aurea*, dies.

- 1300 The Bianchi and Neri parties take their rise in Pistoia. Inf. xxxii. 60.

This is the year in which he supposes himself to see his Vision. Inf. i. 1, and xxi. 109.

He is chosen chief magistrate, or first of the Priors of Florence: and continues in office from June 15 to August 15.

Cimabue, the painter, dies. Purg. xi. 93.

Guido Cavalcanti, the most beloved of our Poet's friends, dies. Inf. x. 59, and Purg. xi. 96.

- 1301 The Bianchi expel the Neri from Pistoia. Inf. xxiv. 142.

- 1302 January 27. During his absence at Rome, Dante is mulcted by his fellow-citizens of the sum of 8000 lire, and condemned to two years' banishment.

March 10. He is sentenced, if taken, to be burned.

Fulcieri de' Calboli commits great atrocities on certain of the Ghibelline party. Purg. xiv. 61.

Carlino de' Pazzi betrays the castle di Piano Travigne, in Valdarno, to the Florentines. Inf. xxxii. 67.

The French vanquished in the battle of Courtrai. Purg. xx. 47.

James, King of Majorca and Minorca, dies. Par. xix. 133.

- 1303 Pope Boniface VIII. dies. Inf. xix. 55; Purg. xx. 86; xxxii. 146, and Par. xxvii. 20.

The other exiles appoint Dante one of a council of twelve, under Alessandro da Romena. He appears to have been much dissatisfied with his colleagues. Par. xvii. 61.

Robert of Brunne translates into English verse the *Manuel de Pechês*, a treatise written in

- A.D.  
 1303 French by Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln.
- 1304 Dante joins with the exiles in an unsuccessful attack on the city of Florence.  
 May. The bridge over the Arno breaks down during a representation of the infernal torments exhibited on that river. Inf. xxvi. 9.  
 July 20. Petrarch, whose father had been banished two years before from Florence, is born at Arezzo.
- 1305 Wincellaus II., King of Bohemia, dies. Purg. vii. 99, and Par. xix. 123.  
 A conflagration happens at Florence. Inf. xxvi. 9.  
 Sir William Wallace is executed at London.
- 1306 Dante visits Padua.
- 1307 He is in Lunigiana with the Marchese Marcello Malaspina. Purg. viii. 133; xix. 140.  
 Dolcino, the fanatic, is burned. Inf. xxviii. 53.  
 Edward II. of England comes to the throne.
- 1308 The Emperor Albert I. murdered. Purg. vi. 98, and Par. xix. 114.  
 Corso Donati, Dante's political enemy, slain. Purg. xxiv. 81.  
 He seeks an asylum at Verona, under the roof of the Signori della Scala. Par. xvii. 69.  
 He wanders, about this time, over various parts of Italy. See his Convito. He is at Paris a second time; and, according to one of the early commentators, visits Oxford.  
 Robert, the patron of Petrarch, is crowned King of Sicily. Par. ix. 2.  
 Duns Scotus dies. He was born about the same time as Dante.
- 1309 Charles II., King of Naples, dies. Par. xix. 125.
- 1310 The Order of the Templars abolished. Purg. xx. 94.  
 Jean de Meun, the continuer of the Roman de la Rose, dies about this time.  
 Pier Crescenzi of Bologna writes his book on agriculture, in Latin.



A.D.

- 1311 Fra Giordano da Rivalta, of Pisa, a Dominican, the author of sermons esteemed for the purity of the Tuscan language, dies.
- 1312 Robert, King of Sicily, opposes the coronation of the Emperor Henry vii. Par. viii. 59.  
Ferdinand iv. of Castile, dies, and is succeeded by Alonzo xi.  
Dino Compagni, a distinguished Florentine, concludes his history of his own time, written in elegant Italian.  
Gaddo Gaddi, the Florentine artist, dies.
- 1313 The Emperor Henry of Luxemburg, by whom he had hoped to be restored to Florence, dies. Par. xvii. 80, and xxx. 135. Henry is succeeded by Lewis of Bavaria.  
Dante takes refuge at Ravenna, with Guido Novello da Polenta.  
Giovanni Boccaccio is born.  
Pope Clement v. dies. Inf. xix. 86, and Par. xxvii. 53, and xxx. 141.
- 1314 Philip iv. of France dies. Purg. vii. 108, and Par. xix. 117.  
Louis x. succeeds.  
Ferdinand iv. of Spain dies. Par. xix. 122.  
Giacopo da Carrara defeated by Can Grande, who makes himself master of Vicenza. Par. ix. 45.
- 1315 Louis x. of France marries Clemenza, sister to our Poet's friend, Charles Martel, King of Hungary. Par. ix. 2.
- 1316 Louis x. of France dies, and is succeeded by Philip v.  
John xii. elected Pope. Par. xxvii. 53.  
Joinville, the French historian, dies about this time.
- 1320 About this time John Gower is born, eight years before his friend Chaucer.
- 1321 September. Dante dies at Ravenna, of a complaint brought on by disappointment at his failure in a negotiation which he had been conducting

A.D.

1321

with the Venetians, for his patron Guido Novello da Polenta.

His obsequies are sumptuously performed at Ravenna by Guido, who himself died in the ensuing year.

# THE DIVINE COMEDY



## INFERNO

### CANTO I

#### ARGUMENT

The writer having lost his way in a gloomy forest, and being hindered by certain wild beasts from ascending a mountain, is met by Virgil, who promises to show him the punishments of Hell, and afterwards of Purgatory ; and that he shall then be conducted by Beatrice into Paradise. He follows the Roman poet.

IN the midway <sup>1</sup> of this our mortal life,  
I found me in a gloomy wood, astray  
Gone from the path direct : and e'en to tell,  
It were no easy task, how savage wild  
That forest, how robust and rough its growth,  
Which to remember only, my dismay  
Renews, in bitterness not far from death.  
Yet, to discourse of what there good befel,  
All else will I relate discover'd there.

How first I enter'd it I scarce can say,  
Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh'd  
My senses down, when the true path I left ;  
But when a mountain's foot I reach'd, where closed

<sup>1</sup> *In the midway.*] That the æra of the Poem is intended by these words to be fixed to the thirty-fifth year of the poet's age, A.D. 1300, will appear more plainly in Canto xxi. where that date is explicitly marked. In his *Convito*, human life is compared to an arch or bow, the highest point of which is, in those well framed by nature, at their thirty-fifth year. Opere di Dante, ediz. Ven. 8vo, 1793, t. 1, p. 195.

The valley that had pierced my heart with dread,  
 I look'd aloft, and saw his shoulders broad  
 Already vested with that planet's beam,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who leads all wanderers safe through every way.

Then was a little respite to the fear,  
 That in my heart's recesses deep had lain  
 All of that night, so pitifully past :  
 And as a man, with difficult short breath,  
 Forespent with toiling, 'scaped from sea to shore,  
 Turns to the perilous wide waste, and stands  
 At gaze ; e'en so my spirit, that yet fail'd,  
 Struggling with terror, turn'd to view the straits  
 That none hath past and lived. My weary frame  
 After short pause recomforted, again  
 I journey'd on over that lonely steep,  
 The hinder foot still firmer.<sup>2</sup> Scarce the ascent  
 Began, when, lo ! a panther,<sup>3</sup> nimble, light,  
 And cover'd with a speckled skin, appear'd ;  
 Nor, when it saw me, vanish'd ; rather strove  
 To check my onward going ; that oft-times,  
 With purpose to retrace my steps, I turn'd.

The hour was morning's prime, and on his way  
 Aloft the sun ascended with those stars,<sup>4</sup>  
 That with him rose when Love divine first moved  
 Those its fair works : so that with joyous hope  
 All things conspired to fill me, the gay skin  
 Of that swift animal, the matin dawn,  
 And the sweet season. Soon that joy was chased,  
 And by new dread succeeded, when in view  
 A lion<sup>5</sup> came, 'gainst me as it appear'd,  
 With his head held aloft and hunger-mad,  
 That e'en the air was fear-struck. A she-wolf<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *That planet's beam.*] The sun.    <sup>2</sup> *The hinder foot.*] It is to be remembered, that in ascending a hill the weight of the body rests on the hinder foot.    <sup>3</sup> *A panther.*] Pleasure or luxury.    <sup>4</sup> *With those stars.*] The sun was in Aries, in which sign he supposes it to have begun its course at the creation.    <sup>5</sup> *A lion.*] Pride or ambition.    <sup>6</sup> *A she-wolf.*] Avarice. It cannot be doubted that the image of these three beasts coming against him is taken by our author from the prophet Jeremiah, v. 6: "Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities." Rossetti follow-

Was at his heels, who in her leanness seem'd  
 Full of all wants, and many a land hath made  
 Disconsolate ere now. She with such fear  
 O'erwhelm'd me, at the sight of her appall'd,  
 That of the height all hope I lost. As one,  
 Who, with his gain elated, sees the time  
 When all unwares is gone, he inwardly  
 Mourns with heart-gripping anguish ; such was I,  
 Haunted by that fell beast, never at peace,  
 Who coming o'er against me, by degrees  
 Impell'd me where the sun in silence rests.

While to the lower space with backward step  
 I fell, my ken discern'd the form of one  
 Whose voice seem'd faint through long disuse of speech.  
 When him in that great desert I espied,  
 "Have mercy on me," cried I out aloud,  
 "Spirit ! or living man ! whate'er thou be."

He answer'd : "Now not man, man once I was,  
 And born of Lombard parents, Mantuans both  
 By country, when the power of Julius<sup>1</sup> yet  
 Was scarcely firm. At Rome my life was past,  
 Beneath the mild Augustus, in the time  
 Of fabled deities and false. A bard

ing Dionisi and other later commentators, interprets Dante's leopard to denote Florence, his lion the King of France, and his wolf the Court of Rome. It is far from improbable that our author might have had a second allegory of this sort in his view ; even as Spenser, in the introductory letter to his poem, tells us that "in the Faerie Queen he meant Glory in his general intention, but in his particular he conceived the most excellent and glorious person of his sovereign the Queen." "And yet," he adds, "in some places else I do otherwise shadow her." Such involution of allegorical meanings may well be supposed to have been frequently present to the mind of Dante throughout the composition of this poem. Whether his acute and eloquent interpreter, Rossetti, may not have been carried much too far in the pursuit of a favourite hypothesis, is another question ; and I must avow my disbelief of the secret jargon imputed to our poet and the other writers of that time in the *Comment on the Divina Commedia* and in the *Spirito Antipapale*, the latter of which works is familiarized to the English reader in Miss Ward's faithful translation.

<sup>1</sup> *When the power of Julius.]*

Nacqui sub Julio, ancorchè fosse tardi.  
 This is explained by the commentators : "Although it were rather late with respect to my birth, before Julius Cæsar assumed the supreme authority, and made himself perpetual dictator." Virgil indeed was born twenty-five years before that event.

Was I, and made Anchises' upright son  
 The subject of my song, who came from Troy,  
 When the flames prey'd on Ilium's haughty towers.<sup>1</sup>  
 But thou, say wherefore to such perils past  
 Return'st thou? wherefore not this pleasant mount  
 Ascendest, cause and source of all delight?"  
 "And art thou then that Virgil, that well-spring,  
 From which such copious floods of eloquence  
 Have issued?" I with front abash'd replied.  
 "Glory and light of all the tuneful train!  
 May it avail me, that I long with zeal  
 Have sought thy volume, and with love immense  
 Have conn'd it o'er. My master thou, and guide!  
 Thou he from whom alone I have derived  
 That style, which for its beauty into fame  
 Exalts me. See the beast, from whom I fled.  
 O save me from her, thou illustrious sage!  
 For every vein and pulse throughout my frame  
 She hath made tremble." He, soon as he saw  
 That I was weeping, answer'd, "Thou must needs  
 Another way pursue, if thou wouldst 'scape  
 From out that savage wilderness. This beast,  
 At whom thou criest, her way will suffer none  
 To pass, and no less hindrance makes than death;  
 So bad and so accursed in her kind,  
 That never sated is her ravenous will,  
 Still after food more craving than before.  
 To many an animal in wedlock vile  
 She fastens, and shall yet to many more,  
 Until that greyhound<sup>2</sup> come, who shall destroy  
 Her with sharp pain. He will not life support  
 By earth nor its base metals, but by love,  
 Wisdom, and virtue; and his land shall be  
 The land 'twixt either Feltro.<sup>3</sup> In his might

<sup>1</sup> *Ilium's haughty towers.*]

Ceciditque superbum

Ilium.

Vir., Æn. iii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *That greyhound.*] This passage has been commonly understood as an eulogium on the liberal spirit of his Veronese patron, Can Grande della Scala. <sup>3</sup> *'Twixt either Feltro.*] Verona, the country of Can della Scala, is situated between Feltro, a city in the Marca Trivigiana, and Monte Feltro, a city in the territory of Urbino. But Dante per



Shall safety to Italia's plains<sup>1</sup> arise,  
 For whose fair realm, Camilla, virgin pure,  
 Nisus, Euryalus, and Turnus fell.  
 He, with incessant chase, through every town  
 Shall worry, until he to hell at length  
 Restore her, thence by envy first let loose.  
 I, for thy profit pondering, now devise  
 That thou mayst follow me ; and I, thy guide,  
 Will lead thee hence through an eternal space,  
 Where thou shalt hear despairing shrieks, and see  
 Spirits of old tormented, who invoke  
 A second death ;<sup>2</sup> and those next view, who dwell  
 Content in fire,<sup>3</sup> for that they hope to come,  
 Whene'er the time may be, among the blest,  
 Into whose regions if thou then desire  
 To ascend, a spirit worthier<sup>4</sup> than I  
 Must lead thee, in whose charge, when I depart,  
 Thou shalt be left : for that Almighty King,

haps does not merely point out the place of Can Grande's nativity, for he may allude further to a prophecy, ascribed to Michael Scot, which imported that the "Dog of Verona would be lord of Padua and of all the Marca Trivigiana." It was fulfilled in the year 1329, a little before Can Grande's death. See G. Villani, Hist. l. x. cap. cv. and cxli. and some lively criticism by Gasparo Gozzi, entitled *Giudizio degli Antichi Poeti*, &c., printed at the end of the Zatta edition of Dante, t. iv. part ii. p. 15. The prophecy, it is likely, was a forgery ; for Michael died before 1400, when Can Grande was only nine years old. See *Inferno*, xx. 114, and *Par.* xvii. 75. Troya has given a new interpretation to Dante's prediction, which he applies to Uguccione della Faggiola, whose country also was situated between two Feltros. See the *Veltro Allegorico di Dante*, p. 110. But after all the pains he has taken, this very able writer fails to make it clear that Uguccione, though he acted a prominent part as a Ghibelline leader, is intended here or in *Purgatorio*, c. xxxiii. 38. The main proofs rest on an ambiguous report mentioned by Boccaccio of the *Inferno* being dedicated to him, and on a suspicious letter attributed to a certain friar Ilario, in which the friar describes Dante addressing him as a stranger, and desiring him to convey that portion of the poem to Uguccione. There is no direct allusion to him throughout the *Divina Commedia*, as there is to the other chief public protectors of our poet during his exile. <sup>1</sup> *Italia's plains.*] "*Umile Italia*," from *Vir.*, *Æn.* lib. iii. 522 :

Humilemque videmus

Italiam.

<sup>2</sup> *A second death.*] "And in these days men shall seek death, and shall not find it ; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." Rev. ix. 6. <sup>3</sup> *Content in fire.*] The spirits in *Purgatory*.  
<sup>4</sup> *A spirit worthier.*] Beatrice, who conducts the Poet through *Paradise*.

Who reigns above, a rebel to his law  
 Adjudges me ; and therefore hath decreed  
 That, to his city, none through me should come.  
 He in all parts hath sway ; there rules, there holds  
 His citadel and throne. O happy those,  
 Whom there he chooses ! ” I to him in few :  
 “ Bard ! by that God, whom thou didst not adore,  
 I do beseech thee (that this ill and worse  
 I may escape) to lead me where thou said’st,  
 That I Saint Peter’s gate<sup>1</sup> may view, and those  
 Who, as thou tell’st, are in such dismal plight.”  
 Onward he moved, I close his steps pursued.

## CANTO II

### ARGUMENT

After the invocation, which poets are used to prefix to their works, he shows that, on a consideration of his own strength, he doubted whether it sufficed for the journey proposed to him, but that, being comforted by Virgil, he at last took courage, and followed him as his guide and master.

Now was the day departing, and the air,  
 Inbrownd with shadows, from their toils released  
 All animals on earth ; and I alone  
 Prepared myself the conflict to sustain,  
 Both of sad pity, and that perilous road,  
 Which my unerring memory shall retrace.

O Muses ! O high genius ! now vouchsafe  
 Your aid. O mind ! that all I saw hast kept  
 Safe in a written record, here thy worth  
 And eminent endowments come to proof.

I thus began : “ Bard ! thou who art my guide,  
 Consider well, if virtue be in me  
 Sufficient, ere to this high enterprise  
 Thou trust me. Thou hast told that Silvius’ sire,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Saint Peter’s gate.*] The gate of Purgatory, which the Poet feigns to be guarded by an angel placed on that station by St. Peter.

<sup>2</sup> *Silvius’ sire.*] Æneas.

Yet clothed in corruptible flesh, among  
The immortal tribes had entrance, and was there  
Sensibly present. Yet if heaven's great Lord,  
Almighty foe to ill, such favour show'd  
In contemplation of the high effect,  
Both what and who from him should issue forth,  
It seems in reason's judgment well deserved ;  
Sith he of Rome and of Rome's empire wide,  
In heaven's empyreal height was chosen sire :  
Both which, if truth be spoken, were ordain'd  
And stablish'd for the holy place, where sits  
Who to great Peter's sacred chair succeeds.  
He from this journey, in thy song renown'd,  
Learn'd things, that to his victory gave rise  
And to the papal robe. In after-times  
The chosen vessel<sup>1</sup> also travel'd there,<sup>2</sup>  
To bring us back assurance in that faith  
Which is the entrance to salvation's way.  
But I, why should I there presume ? or who  
Permits it ? not Æneas I, nor Paul.  
Myself I deem not worthy, and none else  
Will deem me. I, if on this voyage then  
I venture, fear it will in folly end.  
Thou, who art wise, better my meaning know'st,  
Than I can speak." As one, who unresolves  
What he hath late resolved, and with new thoughts  
Changes his purpose, from his first intent  
Removed ; e'en such was I on that dun coast,  
Wasting in thought my enterprise, at first  
So eagerly embraced. " If right thy words  
I scan," replied that shade magnanimous,  
" Thy soul is by vile fear assail'd, which oft  
So overcasts a man, that he recoils  
From noblest resolution, like a beast  
At some false semblance in the twilight gloom.  
That from this terror thou mayst free thyself,

<sup>1</sup> *The chosen vessel.*] St. Paul. Acts ix. 15. " But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way ; for he is a chosen vessel unto me." <sup>2</sup> *There.*] This refers to " the immortal tribes," v. 15. St. Paul having been caught up to heaven. 2 Cor. xii. 2.

I will instruct thee why I came, and what  
 I heard in that same instant, when for thee  
 Grief touch'd me first. I was among the tribe,  
 Who rest suspended,<sup>1</sup> when a dame, so blest  
 And lovely I besought her to command,  
 Call'd me ; her eyes were brighter than the star  
 Of day ; and she, with gentle voice and soft,  
 Angelically tuned, her speech address'd :  
 ' O courteous shade of Mantua ! thou whose fame  
 ' Yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts !<sup>2</sup>  
 ' A friend, not of my fortune but myself,<sup>3</sup>  
 ' On the wide desert in his road has met  
 ' Hindrance so great, that he through fear has turn'd.  
 ' Now much I dread lest he past help have stray'd,  
 ' And I be risen too late for his relief,  
 ' From what in heaven of him I heard. Speed now,  
 ' And by thy eloquent persuasive tongue,  
 ' And by all means for his deliverance meet,  
 ' Assist him. So to me will comfort spring.  
 ' I, who now bid thee on this errand forth,  
 ' Am Beatrice ;<sup>4</sup> from a place I come  
 ' Revisited with joy. Love brought me thence,  
 ' Who prompts my speech. When in my Master's sight  
 ' I stand, thy praise to him I oft will tell.'  
 " She then was silent, and I thus began :  
 ' O Lady ! by whose influence alone  
 ' Mankind excels whatever is contain'd<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Who rest suspended.*] The spirits in Limbo, neither admitted to a state of glory nor doomed to punishment. <sup>2</sup> *As nature lasts.*] Quanto 'l moto lontana. "Mondo," instead of "moto," which Lombardi claims as a reading peculiar to the Nidobeatina edition and some MSS, is also in Landino's edition of 1484. Of this Monti was not aware. See his *Proposta*, under the word "Lontanare."  
<sup>3</sup> *A friend, not of my fortune but myself.*] Se non fortunæ sed hominibus solere esse amicum. Cornelii Nepotis, *Attici Vitæ*, c. ix.

*Cætera fortunæ, non mea turba, fuit.* Ovid., *Trist. lib. i. el. 5. 34.*

Editor's note: "L'Amico mio e non della ventura." Cary has misunderstood this line, which should be translated thus: "My friend, though not the friend of fortune."

<sup>4</sup> *Beatrice.*] The daughter of Folco Portinari, who is here invested with the character of celestial wisdom or theology. See Introduction prefixed. <sup>5</sup> *Whatever is contain'd.*] Every other thing comprised within the lunar heaven, which, being the lowest of all, has the smallest circle.

' Within that heaven which hath the smallest orb,  
 ' So thy command delights me, that to obey,  
 ' If it were done already, would seem late.  
 ' No need hast thou further to speak thy will :  
 ' Yet tell the reason, why thou art not loth  
 ' To leave that ample space, where to return  
 ' Thou burnest, for this centre here beneath.'

" She then : ' Since thou so deeply wouldst inquire,  
 ' I will instruct thee briefly why no dread  
 ' Hinders my entrance here. Those things alone  
 ' Are to be fear'd whence evil may proceed ;  
 ' None else, for none are terrible beside.  
 ' I am so framed by God, thanks to His grace !  
 ' That any sufferance of your misery  
 ' Touches me not, nor flame of that fierce fire  
 ' Assails me. In high heaven a blessed dame <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Resides, who mourns with such effectual grief  
 ' That hindrance, which I send thee to remove,  
 ' That God's stern judgment to her will inclines.  
 ' To Lucia <sup>2</sup> calling, her she thus bespake :  
 " Now doth thy faithful servant need thy aid,  
 " And I commend him to thee." At her word  
 ' Sped Lucia, of all cruelty the foe,  
 ' And coming to the place, where I abode  
 ' Seated with Rachel, her of ancient days,  
 ' She thus address'd me : " Thou true praise of God !  
 " Beatrice ! why is not thy succour lent  
 " To him, who so much loved thee, as to leave  
 " For thy sake all the multitude admires ? <sup>3</sup>  
 " Dost thou not hear how pitiful his wail,  
 " Nor mark the death, which in the torrent flood,

<sup>1</sup> *A blessed dame.* The Divine Mercy. Editor's note : " Donna è gentil nel ciel." I think Dante means the Mother of God, as well as the " abstract idea " of Divine Mercy. <sup>2</sup> *Lucia.*] The enlightening Grace of Heaven ; as it is commonly explained. But Lombardi has well observed, that as our Poet places her in the Paradiso, c. xxxii., amongst the souls of the blessed, so it is probable that she, like Beatrice, had a real existence ; and he accordingly supposes her to have been Saint Lucia the martyr, although she is here representative of an abstract idea. <sup>3</sup> Editor's note : " Che uscìo per te della volgare schiera." The accepted translation of this passage is as follows : " Through love of thee he rose above the common level."

“ Swoln mightier than a sea, him struggling holds ? ”  
‘ Ne’er among men did any with such speed  
‘ Haste to their profit, flee from their annoy,  
‘ As, when these words were spoken, I came here,  
‘ Down from my blessed seat, trusting the force  
‘ Of thy pure eloquence, which thee, and all  
‘ Who well have mark’d it, into honour brings.’

“ When she had ended, her bright beaming eyes  
Tearful she turn’d aside ; whereat I felt  
Redoubled zeal to serve thee. As she will’d,  
Thus am I come : I saved thee from the beast,  
Who thy near way across the goodly mount  
Prevented. What is this comes o’er thee then ?  
Why, why dost thou hang back ? why in thy breast  
Harbour vile fear ? why hast not courage there,  
And noble daring ; since three maids,<sup>1</sup> so blest,  
Thy safety plan, e’en in the court of heaven ;  
And so much certain good my words forebode ? ”

As florets, by the frosty air of night  
Bent down and closed, when day has blanch’d their  
leaves,

Rise all unfolded on their spiry stems ;  
So was my fainting vigour new restored,  
And to my heart such kindly courage ran,  
That I as one undaunted soon replied :  
“ O full of pity she, who undertook  
My succour ! and thou kind, who didst perform  
So soon her true behest ! With such desire  
Thou hast disposed me to renew my voyage,  
That my first purpose fully is resumed.  
Lead on : one only will is in us both.  
Thou art my guide, my master thou, and lord.”

So spake I ; and when he had onward moved,  
I enter’d on the deep and woody way.

<sup>1</sup> *Three maids.*] The Divine Mercy, Lucia, and Beatrice.



## CANTO III

## ARGUMENT

Dante, following Virgil, comes to the gate of Hell ; where, after having read the dreadful words that are written thereon, they both enter. Here, as he understands from Virgil, those were punished who had past their time (for living it could not be called) in a state of apathy and indifference both to good and evil. Then pursuing their way, they arrive at the river Acheron ; and there find the old ferryman Charon, who takes the spirits over to the opposite shore ; which as soon as Dante reaches, he is seized with terror, and falls into a trance.

“ THROUGH me you pass into the city of woe :  
Through me you pass into eternal pain :  
Through me among the people lost for aye.  
Justice the founder of my fabric moved :  
To rear me was the task of power divine,  
Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.<sup>1</sup>  
Before me things create were none, save things  
Eternal, and eternal I endure.  
All hope abandon, ye who enter here.”

Such characters, in colour dim, I mark'd  
Over a portal's lofty arch inscribed.  
Whereat I thus : “ Master, these words import  
Hard meaning.” He as one prepared replied :  
“ Here thou must all distrust behind thee leave ;  
Here be vile fear extinguish'd. We are come  
Where I have told thee we shall see the souls  
To misery doom'd, who intellectual good  
Have lost.” And when his hand he had stretch'd  
forth

To mine, with pleasant looks, whence I was cheer'd,  
Into that secret place he led me on.  
Here sighs,<sup>2</sup> with lamentations and loud moans,  
Resounded through the air pierced by no star,

<sup>1</sup> ——— Power divine,

*Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.*]

The three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

<sup>2</sup> *Here sighs.*] “ Post hæc omnia ad loca tartarea, et ad os infernalis baratri deductus sum, qui simile videbatur puteo, loca vero eadem horridis tenebris, fætoribus exhalantibus stridoribus quoque et nimiis plena erant ejulatibus, juxta quem infernum vermis erat infinitæ magnitudinis, ligatus maxima catena.” Alberici, Visio, § 9.

That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,  
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,  
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,  
With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,  
Made up a tumult, that for ever whirls  
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,  
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

I then, with error<sup>1</sup> yet encompass'd, cried :  
" O master ! what is this I hear ? what race  
Are these, who seem so overcome with woe ? "

He thus to me : " This miserable fate  
Suffer the wretched souls of those, who lived  
Without or praise or blame, with that ill band  
Of angels mix'd, who nor rebellious proved,  
Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves  
Were only. From his bounds Heaven drove them  
forth

Not to impair his lustre ; nor the depth  
Of Hell receives them, lest the accursed tribe<sup>2</sup>  
Should glory thence with exultation vain."

I then : " Master ! what doth aggrieve them thus,  
That they lament so loud ? " He straight replied :  
" That will I tell thee briefly. These of death  
No hope may entertain : and their blind life  
So meanly passes, that all other lots  
They envy. Fame of them the world hath none,  
Nor suffers ; mercy and justice scorn them both.  
Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by."

And I, who straightway look'd, beheld a flag,  
Which whirling ran around so rapidly,  
That it no pause obtain'd : and following came

<sup>1</sup> *With error.*] Instead of " error," Vellutello's edition of 1544 has " orror," a reading remarked also by Landino, in his notes. So much mistaken is the collator of the Monte Cassino MS. in calling it " lezione da niuno notata "; " a reading which no one has observed." <sup>2</sup> *Lest the accursed tribe.*] Lest the rebellious angels should exult at seeing those who were neutral, and therefore less guilty, condemned to the same punishment with themselves. Rossetti, in a long note on this passage, has ably exposed the plausible interpretation of Monti, who would have " alcuna gloria " mean " no glory," and thus make Virgil say " that the evil ones would derive no honour from the society of the neutral." A similar mistake in the same word is made elsewhere by Lombardi. See my note on c. xii. v. 9.

Such a long train of spirits, I should ne'er  
Have thought that death so many had despoil'd.

When some of these I recognised, I saw  
And knew the shade of him, who to base fear <sup>1</sup>  
Yielding, abjured his high estate. Forthwith  
I understood, for certain, this the tribe  
Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing  
And to his foes. These wretches, who ne'er lived,  
Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung  
By wasps and hornets, which bedew'd their cheeks  
With blood, that, mix'd with tears, dropp'd to their  
feet,

And by disgustful worms was gather'd there.

Then looking further onwards, I beheld  
A throng upon the shore of a great stream :  
Whereat I thus : " Sir ! grant me now to know  
Whom here we view, and whence impell'd they seem  
So eager to pass o'er, as I discern  
Through the blear light ? " He thus to me in few :  
" This shalt thou know, soon as our steps arrive  
Beside the woeful tide of Acheron."

Then with eyes downward cast, and fill'd with  
shame,  
Fearing my words offensive to his ear,  
Till we had reach'd the river, I from speech  
Abstain'd. And lo ! toward us in a bark

<sup>1</sup>——— *Who to base fear*

*Yielding, abjured his high estate.*———]

This is commonly understood of Celestine the Fifth, who abdicated the papal power in 1294. Venturi mentions a work written by Innocenzio Barcellini, of the Celestine order, and printed at Milan in 1701, in which an attempt is made to put a different interpretation on this passage. Lombardi would apply it to some one of Dante's fellow-citizens, who, refusing, through avarice or want of spirit, to support the party of the Bianchi at Florence, had been the main occasion of the miseries that befel them. But the testimony of Fazio degli Uberti, who lived so near the time of our author, seems almost decisive on this point. He expressly speaks of the Pope Celestine as being in hell. See the *Dittamondo*, l. iv. cap. xxi. The usual interpretation is further confirmed in a passage in *Canto xxvii. v. 101*. Petrarch, while he passes a high encomium on Celestine for his abdication of the papal power, gives us to understand that there were others who thought it a disgraceful act. See the *De Vita Solit. b. ii. sect. iii. c. 18*.

Comes on an old man<sup>1</sup> hoary white with eld,  
 Crying, "Woe to you, wicked spirits! hope not  
 Ever to see the sky again. I come  
 To take you to the other shore across,  
 Into eternal darkness, there to dwell  
 In fierce heat and in ice. And thou, who there  
 Standest, live spirit! get thee hence, and leave  
 These who are dead." But soon as he beheld  
 I left them not, "By other way," said he,  
 "By other haven shalt thou come to shore,  
 Not by this passage; thee a nimbler boat<sup>2</sup>  
 Must carry." Then to him thus spake my guide;  
 "Charon! thyself torment not: so 'tis will'd,  
 Where will and power are one: ask thou no more."

Straightway in silence fell the shaggy cheeks  
 Of him, the boatman o'er the livid lake,<sup>3</sup>  
 Around whose eyes glared wheeling flames. Mean-  
 while

Those spirits, faint and naked, colour changed,  
 And gnash'd their teeth, soon as the cruel words  
 They heard. God and their parents they blasphemed,  
 The human kind, the place, the time, and seed,  
 That did engender them and give them birth.

Then all together sorely wailing drew  
 To the curst strand, that every man must pass  
 Who fears not God. Charon, demoniac form,  
 With eyes of burning coal, collects them all,  
 Beckoning, and each, that lingers, with his oar  
 Strikes. As fall off the light autumnal leaves,<sup>4</sup>  
 One still another following, till the bough

<sup>1</sup> *An old man.*] Portitor has horrendus aquas et flumina servat  
 Terribili squalore Charon, cui plurima mento  
 Canitiaes inculsa jacet; stant lumina flamma.  
 Virg., *Æn.* lib. vi. 298.

<sup>2</sup> *A nimbler boat.*] He perhaps alludes to the bark "swift and light,"  
 in which the Angel conducts the spirits to Purgatory. See *Purg.*, c. ii. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *The livid lake.*] Vada livida. Virg., *Æn.* lib. vi. 320.

—Totius ut lacus putidæque paludis  
 Lividissima, maximeque est profunda vorago.

Catullus, xviii. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *As fall off the light autumnal leaves.*]

Quam multa in silvis autumni frigore primo  
 Labsa cadunt folia.— Virg., *Æn.* lib. vi. 309.

Strews all its honours on the earth beneath ;  
 E'en in like manner Adam's evil brood  
 Cast themselves, one by one, down from the shore,  
 Each at a beck, as falcon at his call.<sup>1</sup>

Thus go they over through the umber'd wave ;  
 And ever they on the opposing bank  
 Be landed, on this side another throng  
 Still gathers. "Son," thus spake the courteous  
 guide,

"Those who die subject to the wrath of God  
 All here together come from every clime,  
 And to o'erpass the river are not loth :  
 For so heaven's justice goads them on, that fear  
 Is turn'd into desire. Hence ne'er hath past  
 Good spirit. If of thee Charon complain,  
 Now mayst thou know the import of his words."

This said, the gloomy region trembling shook  
 So terribly, that yet with clammy dew  
 Fear chills my brow. The sad earth gave a blast,  
 That, lightening, shot forth a vermilion flame,  
 Which all my senses conquer'd quite, and I  
 Down dropp'd, as one with sudden slumber seized.

## CANTO IV

### ARGUMENT

The Poet, being roused by a clap of thunder, and following his guide onwards descends into Limbo, which is the first circle of Hell, where he finds the souls of those, who, although they have lived virtuously and have not to suffer for great sins, nevertheless, through lack of baptism, merit not the bliss of Paradise. Hence he is led on by Virgil to descend into the second circle.

BROKE the deep slumber in my brain a crash  
 Of heavy thunder, that I shook myself,  
 As one by main force roused. Risen upright,

<sup>1</sup> *As falcon at his call.*] This is Vellutello's explanation, and seems preferable to that commonly given : "as a bird that is enticed to the cage by the call of another."

My rested eyes I moved around, and search'd,  
 With fixed ken, to know what place it was  
 Wherein I stood. For certain, on the brink  
 I found me of the lamentable vale,  
 That dread abyss, that joins a thundrous sound  
 Of plaints innumerable. Dark and deep,  
 And thick with clouds o'erspread, mine eye in vain  
 Explored its bottom, nor could aught discern.

"Now let us to the blind world there beneath  
 Descend;" the bard began, all pale of look:  
 "I go the first, and thou shalt follow next."

Then I, his alter'd hue perceiving, thus:  
 "How may I speed, if thou yieldest to dread,  
 Who still art wont to comfort me in doubt?"

He then: "The anguish of that race below  
 With pity stains my cheek, which thou for fear  
 Mistakest. Let us on. Our length of way  
 Urges to haste." Onward, this said, he moved;  
 And entering led me with him, on the bounds  
 Of the first circle that surrounds the abyss.

Here, as mine ear could note, no plaint was heard  
 Except of sighs, that made the eternal air  
 Tremble, not caused by tortures, but from grief  
 Felt by those multitudes, many and vast,  
 Of men, women, and infants. Then to me  
 The gentle guide: "Inquirest thou not what spirits  
 Are these which thou beholdest? Ere thou pass  
 Farther, I would thou know, that these of sin  
 Were blameless; and if aught they merited,  
 It profits not, since baptism was not theirs,  
 The portal<sup>1</sup> to thy faith. If they before  
 The Gospel lived, they served not God aright;  
 And among such am I. For these defects,  
 And for no other evil, we are lost;  
 Only so far afflicted, that we live  
 Desiring without hope." Sore grief assail'd

<sup>1</sup> *Portal.*] "Porta della fede." This was an alteration made in the text by the Academicians della Crusca, on the authority, as it would appear, of only two MSS. The other reading is "parte della fede"; "part of the faith."



My heart at hearing this, for well I knew  
Suspended in that Limbo many a soul  
Of mighty worth. "O tell me, sire revered!  
Tell me, my master!" I began, through wish  
Of full assurance in that holy faith  
Which vanquishes all error; "say, did e'er  
Any, or through his own or other's merit,  
Come forth from thence, who afterward was blest?"

Piercing the secret purport<sup>1</sup> of my speech,  
He answer'd: "I was new to that estate,  
When I beheld a puissant one<sup>2</sup> arrive  
Amongst us, with victorious trophy crown'd.  
He forth the shade of our first parent drew,  
Abel his child, and Noah righteous man,  
Of Moses lawgiver for faith approved,  
Of patriarch Abraham, and David king,  
Israel with his sire and with his sons,  
Nor without Rachel whom so hard he won,  
And others many more, whom he to bliss  
Exalted. Before these, be thou assured,  
No spirit of human kind was ever saved."

We, while he spake, ceased not our onward road,  
Still passing through the wood; for so I name  
Those spirits thick beset. We were not far  
On this side from the summit, when I kenn'd  
A flame, that o'er the darken'd hemisphere  
Prevailing shined. Yet we a little space  
Were distant, not so far but I in part  
Discover'd that a tribe in honour high  
That place possess'd. "O thou, who every art  
And science valuest! who are these, that boast  
Such honour, separate from all the rest?"

He answer'd: "The renown of their great names,  
That echoes through your world above, acquires  
Favour in heaven, which holds them thus advanced."  
Meantime a voice I heard: "Honour the bard

<sup>1</sup> *Secret purport.*] Lombardi well observes, that Dante seems to have been restrained by awe and reverence from uttering the name of Christ in this place of torment; and that for the same cause, probably, it does not occur once throughout the whole of this first part of the poem. <sup>2</sup> *A puissant one.*] Our Saviour.

Sublime ! his shade returns, that left us late ! ”  
 No sooner ceased the sound, than I beheld  
 Four mighty spirits toward us bend their steps,  
 Of semblance neither sorrowful nor glad.

When thus my master kind began : “ Mark him,  
 Who in his right hand bears that falchion keen,  
 The other three preceding, as their lord.  
 This is that Homer, of all bards supreme :  
 Flaccus the next, in satire’s vein excelling ;  
 The third is Naso ; Lucan is the last.  
 Because they all that appellation own,  
 With which the voice singly accosted me,  
 Honouring they greet me thus, and well they judge.”

So I beheld united the bright school  
 Of him the monarch of sublimest song,<sup>1</sup>  
 That o’er the others like an eagle soars.

When they together short discourse had held,  
 They turn’d to me, with salutation kind  
 Beckoning me ; at the which my master smiled :  
 Nor was this all ; but greater honour still  
 They gave me, for they made me of their tribe ;  
 And I was sixth amid so learn’d a band.

Far as the luminous beacon on we pass’d,  
 Speaking of matters, then befitting well  
 To speak, now fitter left untold. At foot

<sup>1</sup> *The monarch of sublimest song.*] Homer. It appears from a passage in the *Convito*, that there was no Latin translation of Homer in Dante’s time. “*Sappia ciascuno, &c.*,” p. 20. “Every one should know, that nothing, harmonized by musical enchainment, can be transmuted from one tongue into another without breaking all its sweetness and harmony. And this is the reason why Homer has never been turned from Greek into Latin, as the other writers we have of theirs.” This sentence, I fear, may well be regarded as conclusive against the present undertaking. Yet would I willingly bespeak for it at least so much indulgence as Politian claimed for himself, when in the Latin translation, which he afterwards made of Homer, but which has since unfortunately perished, he ventured on certain liberties, both of phraseology and metre, for which the nicer critics of his time thought fit to call him to an account : “*Ego vero tametsi rudis in primis non adeo tamen obtusi sum pectoris in versibus maxime faciundis, ut spatia ista morasque non sentiam. Vero cum mihi de Græco pæne ad verbum forent antiquissima interpretanda carmina, fateor affectavi equidem ut in verbis obsoletam vetustatem, sic in mensurâ ipsâ et numero gratam quandam ut speravi novitatem.*” Ep. lib. i. Baptistæ Guarino.

Of a magnificent castle we arrived,  
 Seven times with lofty walls begirt, and round  
 Defended by a pleasant stream. O'er this  
 As o'er dry land we pass'd. Next, through seven  
     gates,

I with those sages enter'd, and we came  
 Into a mead with lively verdure fresh.

There dwelt a race, who slow their eyes around  
 Majestically moved, and in their port  
 Bore eminent authority: they spake  
 Seldom, but all their words were tuneful sweet.

We to one side retired, into a place  
 Open and bright and lofty, whence each one  
 Stood manifest to view. Incontinent,  
 There on the green enamel of the plain  
 Were shown me the great spirits, by whose sight  
 I am exalted in my own esteem.

Electra<sup>1</sup> there I saw accompanied  
 By many, among whom Hector I knew,  
 Anchises' pious son, and with hawk's eye  
 Cæsar all arm'd, and by Camilla there  
 Penthesilea. On the other side,  
 Old king Latinus seated by his child  
 Lavinia, and that Brutus I beheld  
 Who Tarquin chased, Lucretia, Cato's wife  
 Marcia, with Julia<sup>2</sup> and Cornelia there;  
 And sole apart retired, the Soldan fierce.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Electra.*] The daughter of Atlas, and mother of Dardanus the founder of Troy. See Virg., *Æn.* l. viii. 134, as referred to by Dante in the treatise "De Monarchiâ," lib. ii. "Electra, scilicet, nata magni nominis regis Atlantis, ut de ambobus testimonium reddit poeta noster in octavo, ubi Æneas ad Evandrum sic ait, 'Dardanus Iliacæ,' &c."

<sup>2</sup> *Julia.*] The daughter of Julius Cæsar, and wife of Pompey.

<sup>3</sup> *The Soldan fierce.*] Saladin, or Salaheddin, the rival of Richard Cœur de Lion. See D'Herbelot, *Bibl. Orient.*, the Life of Saladin, by Bohao'edin Ebn Shedad, published by Albert Schultens, with a Latin translation, and Knolles's *Hist. of the Turks*, pp. 57 to 73. "About this time (1193) died the great Sultan Saladin, the greatest terror of the Christians, who, mindful of man's fragility and the vanity of worldly honours, commanded at the time of his death no solemnity to be used at his burial, but only his shirt, in manner of an ensign, made fast unto the point of a lance, to be carried before his dead body as an ensign, a plain priest going before, and crying aloud unto the people in this sort, 'Saladin, Conqueror of the East, of all the greatness

Then when a little more I raised my brow,  
 I spied the master of the sapient throng,<sup>1</sup>  
 Seated amid the philosophic train.  
 Him all admire, all pay him reverence due.  
 There Socrates and Plato both I mark'd,  
 Nearest to him in rank, Democritus,  
 Who sets the world at chance,<sup>2</sup> Diogenes,  
 With Heraclitus, and Empedocles,  
 And Anaxagoras, and Thales sage,  
 Zeno, and Dioscorides well read  
 In nature's secret lore. Orpheus I mark'd  
 And Linus, Tully and moral Seneca,  
 Euclid and Ptolemy, Hippocrates,  
 Galenus, Avicen,<sup>3</sup> and him who made  
 That commentary vast, Averroes.<sup>4</sup>

and riches he had in his life, carrieth not with him any thing more than his shirt.' A sight worthy so great a king, as wanted nothing to his eternal commendation more than the true knowledge of his salvation in Christ Jesus. He reigned about sixteen years with great honour."

<sup>1</sup> *The master of the sapient throng.*] Maestro di color che sanno. Aristotle. The reverence in which the Stagirite was held by our author, cannot be better shown than by a passage in his Convito, p. 142: "Che Aristotile sia degnissimo, &c." "That Aristotle is most worthy of trust and obedience, may be thus proved. Amongst the workmen or artificers of different arts and operations, which are in order to some final art or operation, he, who is the artist or operator in that, ought chiefly to be obeyed and trusted by the rest, as being the one who alone considers the ultimate end of all the other ends. Thus he, who exercises the occupation of a knight, ought to be obeyed by the sword-cutler, the bridle-maker, the armourer, and by all those trades which are in order to the occupation of a knight. And because all human operations respect a certain end, which is that of human life, to which man, inasmuch as he is man, is ordained, the master or artist, who considers of and teaches us that, ought chiefly to be obeyed and trusted: now this is no other than Aristotle; and he is therefore the most deserving of trust and obedience."

<sup>2</sup> ————— *Democritus,*

*Who sets the world at chance.*]

Democritus, who maintained the world to have been formed by the fortuitous concurrence of atoms. <sup>3</sup> *Avicen.*] See D'Herbelot, Bibl. Orient., article Sina. He died in 1050. Fuit Avicenna vir summi ingenii, magnus Philosophus, excellens medicus, et summus apud suos Theologus. Sebastian Scheffer, Introd. in Artem Medicam, p. 63, as quoted in the Historical Observations on the Quadriregio, Ediz. 1725.

<sup>4</sup> ————— *Him who made*

*That commentary vast, Averroes.*]

Averroes, called by the Arabians Roschd, translated and commented the works of Aristotle. According to Tiraboschi (Storia della Lett. Ital. t. v. l. ii. c. ii. sect. 4), he was the source of modern

Of all to speak at full were vain attempt ;  
 For my wide theme so urges, that oft-times  
 My words fall short of what bechanced. In two  
 The six associates part. Another way  
 My sage guide leads me, from that air serene,  
 Into a climate ever vex'd with storms :  
 And to a part I come, where no light shines.

## CANTO V

### ARGUMENT

Coming into the second circle of Hell, Dante at the entrance beholds Minos the Infernal Judge, by whom he is admonished to beware how he enters those regions. Here he witnesses the punishment of carnal sinners, who are tost about ceaselessly in the dark air by the most furious winds. Amongst these, he meets with Francesca of Rimini, through pity at whose sad tale he falls fainting to the ground.

FROM the first circle I descended thus  
 Down to the second, which, a lesser space  
 Embracing, so much more of grief contains,

philosophical impiety. The critic quotes some passages from Petrarch (*Senil. l. v. ep. iii. et Oper. v. ii. p. 1143*) to show how strongly such sentiments prevailed in the time of that poet, by whom they were held in horror and detestation. He adds, that this fanatic admirer of Aristotle translated his writings with that felicity, which might be expected from one who did not know a syllable of Greek, and who was therefore compelled to avail himself of the unfaithful Arabic versions. D'Herbelot, on the other hand, informs us, that "Averroes was the first who translated Aristotle from Greek into Arabic, before the Jews had made their translation ; and that we had for a long time no other text of Aristotle, except that of the Latin translation, which was made from this Arabic version of this great philosopher (Averroes), who afterwards added to it a very ample commentary, of which Thomas Aquinas, and the other scholastic writers, availed themselves, before the Greek originals of Aristotle and his commentators were known to us in Europe." According to D'Herbelot, he died in 1198 ; but Tiraboschi places that event about 1206. "Averroes," says Warton, "as the Asiatic schools decayed by the indolence of the Caliphs, was one of those philosophers who adorned the Moorish schools erected in Africa and Spain. He was a professor in the University of Morocco. He wrote a commentary on all Aristotle's works. He was styled the most peripatetic of all the Arabian writers. He was born at Cordova, of an ancient Arabic family." *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, vol. i. sect. xvii. p. 441.

Provoking bitter moans. There Minos stands,  
Grinning with ghastly feature: he, of all  
Who enter, strict examining the crimes,  
Gives sentence, and dismisses them beneath,  
According as he foldeth him around:  
For when before him comes the ill-fated soul,  
It all confesses; and that judge severe  
Of sins, considering what place in hell  
Suits the transgression, with his tail so oft  
Himself encircles, as degrees beneath  
He dooms it to descend. Before him stand  
Always a numerous throng; and in his turn  
Each one to judgment passing, speaks, and hears  
His fate, thence downward to his dwelling hurl'd.

"O thou! who to this residence of woe  
Approachest!" when he saw me coming, cried  
Minos, relinquishing his dread employ,  
"Look how thou enter here; beware in whom  
Thou place thy trust; let not the entrance broad  
Deceive thee to thy harm." To him my guide:  
"Wherefore exclaimest? Hinder not his way  
By destiny appointed; so 'tis will'd,  
Where will and power are one. Ask thou no more."

Now 'gin the rueful wailings to be heard.  
Now am I come where many a plaining voice  
Smites on mine ear. Into a place I came  
Where light was silent all. Bellowing there groan'd  
A noise, as of a sea in tempest torn  
By warring winds. The stormy blast of hell  
With restless fury drives the spirits on,  
Whirl'd round and dash'd amain with sore annoy.  
When they arrive before the ruinous sweep,  
There shrieks are heard, there lamentations, moans,  
And blasphemies 'gainst the good Power in heaven.

I understood, that to this torment sad  
The carnal sinners are condemn'd, in whom  
Reason by lust is sway'd. As in large troops  
And multitudinous, when winter reigns,  
The starlings on their wings are borne abroad;  
So bears the tyrannous gust those evil souls.



On this side and on that, above, below,  
 It drives them : hope of rest to solace them  
 Is none, nor e'en of milder pang. As cranes,  
 Chanting their dolorous notes, traverse the sky,  
 Stretch'd out in long array ; so I beheld  
 Spirits, who came loud wailing, hurried on  
 By their dire doom. Then I : " Instructor ! who  
 Are these, by the black air so scourged ? "—" The  
 first

'Mong those, of whom thou question'st," he replied,  
 " O'er many tongues was empress. She in vice  
 Of luxury was so shameless, that she made  
 Liking be lawful by promulged decree,  
 To clear the blame she had herself incurr'd.  
 This is Semiramis, of whom 'tis writ,  
 That she succeeded Ninus her espoused ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And held the land, which now the Soldan rules.  
 The next in amorous fury slew herself,  
 And to Sicheus' ashes broke her faith :  
 Then follows Cleopatra, lustful queen."

There mark'd I Helen, for whose sake so long  
 The time was fraught with evil ; there the great  
 Achilles, who with love fought to the end.  
 Paris I saw, and Tristan ; and beside,  
 A thousand more he show'd me, and by name  
 Pointed them out, whom love bereaved of life.

When I had heard my sage instructor name

<sup>1</sup> *That she succeeded Ninus her espoused.]*

Che succedette a Nino e fu sua sposa.

M. Artaud, in his *Histoire de Dante*, p. 589, mentions a manuscript work called Attacanti's *Quadragesimale de reditu peccatoris ad Deum*, in which the line is thus cited :

Che sugger dette a Nino e fu sua sposa.

"Who suckled Ninus, and was his wife."

This remarkable reading had been before noticed by Federici. *Intorno ad alcune varianti nel testo della Divina Commedia*. Ed. Milan, 1836. See the *Biblioteca Italiana*, tom. 82, p. 282. It appears from the treatise *De Monarchiâ* (l. ii.) that Dante derived his knowledge of Assyrian history from his favourite author Orosius (l. i. c. iv.), who relates that Semiramis both succeeded Ninus through the artifice of personating her son, and that she committed incest with her son ; but as the name of her husband Ninus only is there recorded, and as other historians call the son Ninias, it is probable that the common reading is right.

Those dames and knights of antique days, o'erpower'd  
 By pity, well-nigh in amaze my mind  
 Was lost ; and I began : " Bard ! willingly  
 I would address those two together coming,  
 Which seem so light before the wind." He thus :  
 " Note thou, when nearer they to us approach.  
 Then by that love which carries them along,  
 Entreat ; and they will come." Soon as the wind  
 Sway'd them toward us, I thus framed my speech :  
 " O wearied spirits ! come, and hold discourse  
 With us, if by none else restrain'd." As doves  
 By fond desire invited, on wide wings  
 And firm, to their sweet nest returning home,  
 Cleave the air, wafted by their will along ;  
 Thus issued, from that troop where Dido ranks,  
 They, through the ill air speeding : with such force  
 My cry prevail'd, by strong affection urged.

" O gracious creature and benign ! who go'st  
 Visiting, through this element obscure,<sup>1</sup>  
 Us, who the world with bloody stain imbrued ;  
 If, for a friend, the King of all, we own'd,  
 Our prayer to him should for thy peace arise,  
 Since thou hast pity on our evil plight.  
 Of whatsoe'er to hear or to discourse  
 It pleases thee, that will we hear, of that  
 Freely with thee discourse, while e'er the wind,  
 As now, is mute. The land,<sup>2</sup> that gave me birth,  
 Is situate on the coast, where Po descends  
 To rest in ocean with his sequent streams.

" Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Element obscure.*] "L'aer perso." Much is said by the commentators concerning the exact sense of the word "perso." It cannot be explained in clearer terms than those used by Dante himself in his *Convito*: "Il perso e un colore misto di purpureo e nero, ma vince il nero," p. 185. "It is a colour mixed of purple and black, but the black prevails." The word recurs several times in this poem.

<sup>2</sup> *The land.*] Ravenna.

<sup>3</sup> *Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt.*]

Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende.

That the reader of the original may not be misled as to the exact sense of the word "s'apprende," which I have rendered "is learnt," it may be right to apprise him that it signifies "is caught," and that it is a metaphor from a thing taking fire. Thus it is used by Guido

Entangled him by that fair form, from me  
 Ta'en in such cruel sort, as grieves me still :  
 Love, that denial takes from none beloved,  
 Caught me with pleasing him so passing well,  
 That, as thou seest, he yet deserts me not.  
 Love brought us to one death : *Caïna*<sup>1</sup> waits  
 The soul, who spilt our life." Such were their words ;  
 At hearing which, downward I bent my looks,  
 And held them there so long, that the bard cried :  
 " What art thou pondering ? " I in answer thus :  
 " Alas ! by what sweet thoughts, what fond desire  
 Must they at length to that ill pass have reach'd ! "

Then turning, I to them my speech address'd,  
 And thus began : " Francesca !<sup>2</sup> your sad fate  
 Even to tears my grief and pity moves.  
 But tell me ; in the time of your sweet sighs,  
 By what, and how Love granted, that ye knew  
 Your yet uncertain wishes ? " She replied :  
 " No greater grief than to remember days  
 Of joy, when misery is at hand. That kens  
 Thy learn'd instructor. Yet so eagerly  
 If thou art bent to know the primal root,  
 From whence our love gat being, I will do  
 As one, who weeps and tells his tale. One day,  
 For our delight we read of *Lancelot*,<sup>3</sup>

Guinicelli, whom indeed our Poet seems here to have had in view :

*Fuoco d'Amore in gentil cor s'apprene,  
 Come vertute in pietra preziosa.*

Sonetti, &c., di diversi Antichi Toscani. Ediz. Giunti, 1527, l. ix. p. 107.  
 The fire of love in gentle heart is caught,  
 As virtue in the precious stone.

<sup>1</sup> *Caïna*.] The place to which murderers are doomed. <sup>2</sup> *Francesca*.] Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, was given by her father in marriage to Lanciotto, son of Malatesta, lord of Rimini, a man of extraordinary courage, but deformed in his person. His brother Paolo, who unhappily possessed those graces which the husband of Francesca wanted, engaged her affections ; and being taken in adultery, they were both put to death by the enraged Lanciotto. See Notes to Canto xxvii. v. 38 and 43. Troya relates, that they were buried together ; and that three centuries after, the bodies were found at Rimini, whither they had been removed from Pesaro, with the silken garments yet fresh. *Veltro Allegorico di Dante*, Ediz. 1826, p. 33. <sup>3</sup> *Lancelot*.] One of the Knights of the Round Table, and the lover of Ginevra, or Guinever, celebrated in

How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no  
 Suspicion near us. Oft-times by that reading  
 Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue  
 Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one point  
 Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,  
 The wished smile so rapturously kiss'd  
 By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er  
 From me shall separate, at once my lips  
 All trembling kiss'd. The book and writer both  
 Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day  
 We read no more."<sup>1</sup> While thus one spirit spake,  
 The other wail'd so sorely, that heart-struck  
 I, through compassion fainting, seem'd not far  
 From death, and like a corse fell to the ground.

## CANTO VI

## ARGUMENT

On his recovery, the Poet finds himself in the third circle, where the gluttonous are punished. Their torment is, to lie in the mire, under a continual and heavy storm of hail, snow, and discoloured water; Cerberus meanwhile barking over them with his threefold throat, and rending them piecemeal. One of these, who on earth was named Ciaccio, foretells the divisions with which Florence is about to be distracted. Dante proposes a question to his guide, who solves it; and they proceed towards the fourth circle.

My sense reviving, that erewhile had droop'd  
 With pity for the kindred shades, whence grief  
 O'ercame me wholly, straight around I see  
 New torments, new tormented souls, which way  
 Soe'er I move, or turn, or bend my sight.  
 In the third circle I arrive, of showers  
 Ceaseless, accursed, heavy and cold, unchanged  
 For ever, both in kind and in degree.  
 Large hail, discolour'd water, sleety flaw

romance. The incident alluded to seems to have made a strong impression on the imagination of Dante, who introduces it again, in the *Paradiso*, Canto xvi.

<sup>1</sup> ——— *In its leaves that day*

*We read no more.*] Nothing can exceed the delicacy with which Francesca in these words intimates her guilt.

Through the dun midnight air stream'd down amain :  
Stank all the land whereon that tempest fell.

Cerberus, cruel monster, fierce and strange,  
Through his wide threefold throat, barks as a dog  
Over the multitude immersed beneath.  
His eyes glare crimson, black his unctuous beard,  
His belly large, and claw'd the hands, with which  
He tears the spirits, flays them, and their limbs  
Piecemeal disparts. Howling there spread, as curs,  
Under the rainy deluge, with one side  
The other screening, oft they roll them round,  
A wretched, godless crew. When that great worm<sup>1</sup>  
Descried us, savage Cerberus, he oped  
His jaws, and the fangs show'd us ; not a limb  
Of him but trembled. Then my guide, his palms  
Expanding on the ground, thence fill'd with earth  
Raised them, and cast it in his ravenous maw.  
E'en as a dog, that yelling bays for food  
His keeper, when the morsel comes, lets fall  
His fury, bent alone with eager haste  
To swallow it ; so dropp'd the loathsome cheeks  
Of demon Cerberus, who thundering stuns  
The spirits, that they for deafness wish in vain.

We, o'er the shades thrown prostrate by the brunt  
Of the heavy tempest passing, set our feet  
Upon their emptiness, that substance seem'd.

They all along the earth extended lay,  
Save one, that sudden raised himself to sit,  
Soon as that way he saw us pass. " O thou ! "  
He cried, " who through the infernal shades art led,  
Own, if again thou know'st me. Thou wast framed  
Or ere my frame was broken." I replied :  
" The anguish thou endurest perchance so takes  
Thy form from my remembrance, that it seems  
As if I saw thee never. But inform  
Me who thou art, that in a place so sad

<sup>1</sup> *That great worm.*] Juxta—infernum vermis erat infinitæ magnitudinis ligatus maximâ catena. Alberici, Visio, § 9. In Canto xxxiv. Lucifer is called

The abhorred worm, that boreth through the world.

Art set, and in such torment, that although  
 Other be greater, none disgusteth more.”  
 He thus in answer to my words rejoin’d :  
 “ Thy city, heap’d with envy to the brim,  
 Ay, that the measure overflows its bounds,  
 Held me in brighter days. Ye citizens  
 Were wont to name me Ciacco.<sup>1</sup> For the sin  
 Of gluttony, damned vice, beneath this rain,  
 E’en as thou seest, I with fatigue am worn :  
 Nor I sole spirit in this woe : all these  
 Have by like crime incurr’d like punishment.”

No more he said, and I my speech resumed :  
 “ Ciacco ! thy dire affliction grieves me much,  
 Even to tears. But tell me, if thou know’st,  
 What shall at length befall the citizens  
 Of the divided city ; <sup>2</sup> whether any  
 Just one inhabit there : and tell the cause,  
 Whence jarring Discord hath assail’d it thus ? ”

He then : “ After long striving they will come  
 To blood ; and the wild party from the woods <sup>3</sup>  
 Will chase the other <sup>4</sup> with much injury forth.  
 Then it behoves that this must fall, <sup>5</sup> within  
 Three solar circles ; <sup>6</sup> and the other rise  
 By borrow’d force of one, who under shore  
 Now rests. <sup>7</sup> It shall a long space hold aloof  
 Its forehead, keeping under heavy weight  
 The other opprest, indignant at the load,

<sup>1</sup> *Ciacco.*] So called from his inordinate appetite ; Ciacco, in Italian, signifying a pig. The real name of this glutton has not been transmitted to us. He is introduced in Boccaccio’s Decameron, Giorn. ix. Nov. 8. <sup>2</sup> *The divided city.*] The city of Florence, divided

into the Bianchi and Neri factions. <sup>3</sup> *The wild party from the woods.*] So called, because it was headed by Veri de’ Cerchi, whose family had lately come into the city from Acone, and the woody country of the Val di Nievole. <sup>4</sup> *The other.*] The opposite party of the Neri, at the head of which was Corso Donati. <sup>5</sup> *This must fall.*] The Bianchi.

<sup>6</sup> *Three solar circles.*] Three years.

<sup>7</sup> ——— *Of one, who under shore*

*Now rests.*] Charles of Valois, by whose means the Neri were replaced. Editor’s note : “ La forza di tal che testé piaggia.” Modern commentators translate this as : “ the force of one who now is tacking.” The line refers not to Charles of Valois, but to Boniface VIII. who secretly helped the Neri and eventually caused their victory.



And grieving sore. The just are two in number,<sup>1</sup>  
 But they neglected. Avarice, envy, pride,  
 Three fatal sparks, have set the hearts of all  
 On fire." Here ceased the lamentable sound;  
 And I continued thus: "Still would I learn  
 More from thee, further parley still entreat.  
 Of Farinata and Tegghiaio<sup>2</sup> say,  
 They who so well deserved; of Giacopo,<sup>3</sup>  
 Arrigo, Mosca,<sup>4</sup> and the rest, who bent  
 Their minds on working good. Oh! tell me where  
 They bide, and to their knowledge let me come.  
 For I am prest with keen desire to hear  
 If heaven's sweet cup, or poisonous drug of hell,  
 Be to their lip assign'd." He answer'd straight:  
 "These are yet blacker spirits. Various crimes  
 Have sunk them deeper in the dark abyss.  
 If thou so far descendest, thou mayst see them.  
 But to the pleasant world, when thou return'st,  
 Of me make mention, I entreat thee, there.  
 No more I tell thee, answer thee no more."

This said, his fixed eyes he turn'd askance,  
 A little eyed me, then bent down his head,  
 And 'midst his blind companions with it fell.

<sup>1</sup> *The just are two in number.*] Who these two were, the commentators are not agreed. Some understand them to be Dante himself, and his friend Guido Cavalcanti. But this would argue a presumption, which our Poet himself elsewhere contradicts; for, in the Purgatory, he owns his consciousness of not being exempted from one at least of "the three fatal sparks, which had set the hearts of all on fire." See Canto xiii. 126. Others refer the encomium to Barduccio and Giovanni Vespignano, adducing the following passage from Villani in support of their opinion: "In the year 1331 died in Florence two just and good men, of holy life and conversation, and bountiful in almsgiving, although laymen. The one was named Barduccio, and was buried in S. Spirito, in the place of the Frati Romitani: the other, named Giovanni da Vespignano, was buried in S. Pietro Maggiore. And by each, God showed open miracles, in healing the sick and lunatic after divers manners; and for each there was ordained a solemn funeral, and many images of wax set up in discharge of vows that had been made. G. Villani, lib. x. cap. clxxix." <sup>2</sup> *Of Farinata and Tegghiaio.*] See Canto x. and Notes, and Canto xvi. and Notes.

<sup>3</sup> *Giacopo.*] Giacopo Rusticucci. See Canto xvi. and Notes. <sup>4</sup> *Arrigo, Mosca.*] Of Arrigo, who is said by the commentators to have been of the noble family of the Fifanti, no mention afterwards occurs. Mosca degli Uberti, or de' Lamberti, is introduced in Canto xxviii.

When thus my guide: "No more his bed he leaves,  
 Ere the last angel-trumpet blow. The Power  
 Adverse to these shall then in glory come,  
 Each one forthwith to his sad tomb repair,  
 Resume his fleshly vesture and his form,  
 And hear the eternal doom re-echoing rend  
 The vault." So pass'd we through that mixture foul  
 Of spirits and rain, with tardy steps; meanwhile  
 Touching,<sup>1</sup> though slightly, on the life to come.  
 For thus I question'd: "Shall these tortures, Sir!  
 When the great sentence passes, be increased,  
 Or mitigated, or as now severe?"

He then: "Consult thy knowledge;<sup>2</sup> that decides,  
 That, as each thing to more perfection grows,  
 It feels more sensibly both good and pain.  
 Though ne'er to true perfection may arrive  
 This race accurst, yet nearer then, than now,  
 They shall approach it." Compassing that path,  
 Circuitous we journey'd; and discourse,  
 Much more than I relate, between us pass'd:  
 Till at the point, whence the steps led below,  
 Arrived, there Plutus, the great foe, we found.

## CANTO VII

### ARGUMENT

In the present Canto, Dante describes his descent into the fourth circle, at the beginning of which he sees Plutus stationed. Here one like doom awaits the prodigal and the avaricious; which is, to meet in direful conflict, rolling great weights against each other with mutual upbraidings. From hence Virgil takes occasion to show how vain the goods that are committed into the charge of Fortune; and this moves our author to inquire what being that Fortune is, of whom he speaks: which question being resolved, they go down into the fifth circle, where they find the wrathful

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<sup>1</sup> *Touching.*] Conversing, though in a slight and superficial manner, on the life to come. <sup>2</sup> *Consult thy knowledge.*] We are referred to the following passage in St. Augustine:—"Cum fiet resurrectio carnis, et bonorum gaudia et malorum tormenta majora erunt."—"At the resurrection of the flesh, both the happiness of the good and the torments of the wicked will be increased."

and gloomy tormented in the Stygian lake. Having made a compass round great part of this lake, they come at last to the base of a lofty tower.

"AH me! O Satan! Satan!" <sup>1</sup> loud exclaim'd  
Plutus, in accent hoarse of wild alarm:  
And the kind sage, whom no event surprised,  
To comfort me thus spake: "Let not thy fear  
Harm thee, for power in him, be sure, is none  
To hinder down this rock thy safe descent."  
Then to that swoln lip turning, "Peace!" he cried,  
"Curst wolf! thy fury inward on thyself  
Prey, and consume thee! Through the dark profound,  
Not without cause, he passes. So 'tis will'd  
On high, there where the great Archangel pour'd  
Heaven's vengeance on the first adulterer proud." <sup>2</sup>

As sails, full spread and bellying with the wind  
Drop suddenly collapsed, if the mast split;  
So to the ground down dropp'd the cruel fiend.

Thus we, descending to the fourth steep ledge,  
Gain'd on the dismal shore, that all the woe  
Hems in of all the universe. Ah me!  
Almighty Justice! in what store thou heap'st <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ah me! O Satan! Satan!*] Pape Satan, Pape Satan, aleppe. *Pape* is said by the commentators to be the same as the Latin word *papæ*, "strange!" Of *aleppe* they do not give a more satisfactory account. See the Life of Benvenuto Cellini, translated by Dr. Nugent, v. ii. b. iii. c. vii. p. 113, where he mentions "having heard the words *Paix, paix, Satan! allez, paix!* in the courts of justice at Paris. I recollected what Dante said, when he with his master Virgil entered the gates of hell: for Dante, and Giotto the painter, were together in France, and visited Paris with particular attention, where the court of justice may be considered as hell. Hence it is that Dante, who was likewise perfect master of the French, made use of that expression; and I have often been surprised that it was never understood in that sense." <sup>2</sup> *The first adulterer proud.*] Satan. The word "fornication," or "adultery," "strupo," is here used for a revolt of the affections from God, according to the sense in which it is often applied in Scripture. But Monti, following Grassi's "Essay on Synonymes," supposes "strupo" to mean "troop"; the word "strup" being still used in the Piemontese dialect for "a flock of sheep," and answering to "troupeau" in French. In that case, "superbo strupo" would signify "the troop of rebel angels who sinned through pride." <sup>3</sup> *In what store thou heap'st.*] Some understand "chi stipa" to mean either "who can imagine," or "who can describe the torments," &c. I have followed Landino, whose words, though very plain, seem to have been mistaken by Lombardi: "Chi stipa, chi accumulata, ed insieme raccoglie; quasi dica, tu giustizia aduni tanti supplicii."

New pains, new troubles, as I here beheld.  
Wherefore doth fault of ours bring us to this ?

E'en as a billow, on Charybdis rising,  
Against encounter'd billow dashing breaks ;  
Such is the dance this wretched race must lead,  
Whom more than elsewhere numerous here I found.  
From one side and the other, with loud voice,  
Both roll'd on weights, by main force of their breasts,  
Then smote together, and each one forthwith  
Roll'd them back voluble, turning again ;  
Exclaiming these, " Why holdest thou so fast ? "  
Those answering, " And why castest thou away ? "  
So, still repeating their spiteful song,  
They to the opposite point, on either hand,  
Traversed the horrid circle : then arrived,  
Both turn'd them round, and through the middle  
space

Conflicting met again. At sight whereof  
I, stung with grief, thus spake : " O say, my guide !  
What race is this. Were these, whose heads are  
shorn,

On our left hand, all separate to the church ? "

He straight replied : " In their first life, these all  
In mind were so distorted, that they made,  
According to due measure, of their wealth  
No use. This clearly from their words collect,  
Which they howl forth, at each extremity  
Arriving of the circle, where their crime  
Contrary in kind disparts them. To the church  
Were separate those, that with no hairy cowl  
Are crown'd, both Popes and Cardinals, o'er whom  
Avarice dominion absolute maintains."

I then : " 'Mid such as these some needs must be,  
Whom I shall recognise, that with the blot  
Of these foul sins were stain'd." He answering thus :  
" Vain thought conceivest thou. That ignoble life,  
Which made them vile before, now makes them dark,  
And to all knowledge indiscernible.  
For ever they shall meet in this rude shock :  
These from the tomb with clenched grasp shall rise,

Those with close-shaven locks. That ill they gave,  
 And ill they kept, hath of the beauteous world  
 Deprived, and set them at this strife, which needs  
 No labour'd phrase of mine to set it off.  
 Now mayst thou see, my son ! how brief, how vain,  
 The goods committed into Fortune's hands,  
 For which the human race keep such a coil !  
 Not all the gold that is beneath the moon,  
 Or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls  
 Might purchase rest for one." I thus rejoin'd :  
 " My guide ! of thee this also would I learn ;  
 This Fortune, that thou speak'st of, what it is,  
 Whose talons grasp the blessings of the world ? "

He thus : " O beings blind ! what ignorance  
 Besets you ! Now my judgment hear and mark.  
 He, whose transcendent wisdom passes all,  
 The heavens creating, gave them ruling powers  
 To guide them ; so that each part <sup>1</sup> shines to each,  
 Their light in equal distribution pour'd.  
 By similar appointment He ordain'd,  
 Over the world's bright images to rule,  
 Superintendence of a guiding hand  
 And general minister,<sup>2</sup> which, at due time,  
 May change the empty vantages of life  
 From race to race, from one to other's blood,  
 Beyond prevention of man's wisest care :  
 Wherefore one nation rises into sway,  
 Another languishes, e'en as her will  
 Decrees, from us conceal'd, as in the grass  
 The serpent train. Against her nought avails  
 Your utmost wisdom. She with foresight plans,  
 Judges, and carries on her reign, as theirs  
 The other powers divine. Her changes know  
 None intermission : by necessity  
 She is made swift, so frequent come who claim

<sup>1</sup> *Each part.*] Each hemisphere of the heavens shines upon that hemisphere of the earth which is placed under it. <sup>2</sup> *General minister.*] Lombardi cites an apposite passage from Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, lib. v. :—" Nos eas causas, quæ dicuntur fortuitæ (unde etiam fortuna nomen accepit) non dicimus nullas, sed latentes, easque tribuimus.. vel veri Dei, vel quorumlibet spirituum voluntati."

Succession in her favours: This is she,  
 So execrated e'en by those whose debt  
 To her is rather praise: they wrongfully  
 With blame requite her, and with evil word;  
 But she is blessed, and for that reck's not:  
 Amidst the other primal beings glad,  
 Rolls on her sphere, and in her bliss exults.  
 Now on our way pass we, to heavier woe  
 Descending: for each star is falling now,  
 That mounted at our entrance, and forbids  
 Too long our tarrying." We the circle cross'd  
 To the next steep, arriving at a well,  
 That boiling pours itself down to a foss  
 Sluiced from its source. Far murkier was the wave  
 Than sablest grain: and we in company  
 Of the inky waters, journeying by their side,  
 Enter'd, though by a different track,<sup>1</sup> beneath.  
 Into a lake, the Stygian named, expands  
 The dismal stream, when it hath reach'd the foot  
 Of the grey wither'd cliffs. Intent I stood  
 To gaze, and in the marish sunk descried  
 A miry tribe, all naked, and with looks  
 Betokening rage. They with their hands alone  
 Struck not, but with the head, the breast, the feet,  
 Cutting each other piecemeal with their fangs.

The good instructor spake: "Now seest thou, son!  
 The souls of those, whom anger overcame.  
 This too for certain know, that underneath  
 The water dwells a multitude, whose sighs  
 Into these bubbles make the surface heave,  
 As thine eye tells thee wheresoe'er it turn.  
 Fix'd in the slime, they say: 'Sad once were we,  
 ' In the sweet air made gladsome by the sun,  
 ' Carrying a foul and lazy mist within:  
 ' Now in these murky settlements are we sad.'  
 Such dolorous strain they gurgle in their throats,

<sup>1</sup> *A different track.*] Una via diversa. Some understand this "a strange path"; as the word is used in the preceding Canto: "fera crudele e diversa," "monster fierce and strange"; and in the Vita Nuova, "visi diversi ed orribili a vedere," "visages strange and horrible to see."



But word distinct can utter none." Our route  
 Thus compass'd we, a segment widely stretch'd  
 Between the dry embankment, and the core  
 Of the loath'd pool, turning meanwhile our eyes  
 Downward on those who gulp'd its muddy lees;  
 Nor stopp'd, till to a tower's low base we came.

## CANTO VIII

## ARGUMENT

A signal having been made from the tower, Phlegyas, the ferryman of the lake, speedily crosses it, and conveys Virgil and Dante to the other side. On their passage, they meet with Filippo Argenti, whose fury and torment are described. They then arrive at the city of Dis, the entrance whereto is denied, and the portals closed against them by many Demons.

My theme pursuing,<sup>1</sup> I relate, that ere  
 We reach'd the lofty turret's base, our eyes  
 Its height ascended, where we mark'd uphung  
 Two cressets, and another saw from far  
 Return the signal, so remote, that scarce  
 The eye could catch its beam. I, turning round  
 To the deep source of knowledge, thus inquired:  
 "Say what this means; and what, that other light  
 In answer set: what agency doth this?"  
 "There on the filthy waters," he replied,

<sup>1</sup> *My theme pursuing.*] It is related by some of the early commentators, that the seven preceding Cantos were found at Florence after our Poet's banishment, by some one who was searching over his papers, which were left in that city; that by this person they were taken to Dino Frescobaldi; and that he, being much delighted with them, forwarded them to the Marchese Morello Malaspina, at whose entreaty the poem was resumed. This account, though very circumstantially related, is rendered improbable by the prophecy of Ciacco in the sixth Canto, which must have been written after the events to which it alludes. The manner in which the present Canto opens furnishes no proof of the truth of the report; for, as Maffei remarks in his *Osservazioni Letterarie*, tom. ii. p. 249, referred to by Lombardi, it might as well be affirmed that Ariosto was interrupted in his *Orlando Furioso*, because he begins c. xvi.:

Dico la bella storia ripigliando.

And c. xxii.: Ma tornando al lavor, che vario ordisco.

“E’en now what next awaits us mayst thou see,  
If the marsh-gendered fog conceal it not.”

Never was arrow from the cord dismiss’d,  
That ran its way so nimbly through the air,  
As a small bark, that through the waves I spied  
Toward us coming, under the sole sway  
Of one that ferried it, who cried aloud :  
“Art thou arrived, fell spirit?”—“Phlegyas, Phlegyas,<sup>1</sup>  
This time thou criest in vain,” my lord replied ;  
“No longer shalt thou have us, but while o’er  
The slimy pool we pass.” As one who hears  
Of some great wrong he hath sustain’d, whereat  
Inly he pines : so Phlegyas inly pined  
In his fierce ire. My guide, descending, stepp’d  
Into the skiff, and bade me enter next,  
Close at his side ; nor, till my entrance, seem’d  
The vessel freighted. Soon as both embark’d,  
Cutting the waves, goes on the ancient prow,  
More deeply than with others it is wont.

While we our course o’er the dead channel held,  
One drench’d in mire before me came, and said :  
“Who art thou, that thus comest ere thine hour ?”

I answer’d : “Though I come, I tarry not :  
But who art thou, that art become so foul ?”

“One, as thou seest, who mourn :” he straight  
replied.

To which I thus : “In mourning and in woe,  
Curst spirit ! tarry thou. I know thee well,  
E’en thus in filth disguised.” Then stretch’d he forth  
Hands to the bark ; whereof my teacher sage  
Aware, thrusting him back : “Away ! down there  
To the other dogs !” then, with his arms my neck  
Encircling, kiss’d my cheek, and spake : “O soul,  
Justly disdainful ! blest was she in whom  
Thou wast conceived.<sup>2</sup> He in the world was one

<sup>1</sup> *Phlegyas.*] Phlegyas, who was so incensed against Apollo, for having violated his daughter Coronis, that he set fire to the temple of that deity, by whose vengeance he was cast into Tartarus. See Virg., *Æn.* l. vi. 618.

<sup>2</sup> ——— *In whom*

*Thou wast conceived.*] “Che ’n te s’incinse.” Several of the com-

For arrogance noted : to his memory  
 No virtue lends its lustre ; even so  
 Here is his shadow furious. There above,  
 How many now hold themselves mighty kings,  
 Who here like swine shall wallow in the mire,  
 Leaving behind them horrible dispraise."

I then : " Master ! him fain would I behold  
 Whelm'd in these dregs, before we quit the lake."

He thus : " Or ever to thy view the shore  
 Be offer'd, satisfied shall be that wish,  
 Which well deserves completion." Scarce his words  
 Were ended, when I saw the miry tribes  
 Set on him with such violence, that yet  
 For that render I thanks to God, and praise.  
 " To Filippo Argenti ! " <sup>1</sup> cried they all :  
 And on himself the moody Florentine  
 Turn'd his avenging fangs. Him here we left,  
 Nor speak I of him more. But on mine ear  
 Sudden a sound of lamentation smote,  
 Whereat mine eye unbarr'd I sent abroad.

And thus the good instructor : " Now, my son  
 Draws near the city, that of Dis is named,  
 With its grave denizens, a mighty throng."

I thus : " The minarets already, Sir !  
 There, certes, in the valley I descry,  
 Gleaming vermilion, as if they from fire  
 Had issued." He replied : " Eternal fire,  
 That inward burns, shows them with ruddy flame  
 Illumed ; as in this nether hell thou seest."

We came within the fosses deep, that moat  
 This region comfortless. The walls appear'd  
 As they were framed of iron. We had made  
 Wide circuit, ere a place we reach'd, where loud  
 The mariner cried vehement : " Go forth :

mentators have stumbled at this word, which is the same as "enceinte" in French, and "inciens" in Latin. For many instances, in which it is thus used, see the notes on Boccaccio's *Decameron*, p. 101, in the Giunti edition, 1573.

<sup>1</sup> *Filippo Argenti*.] Boccaccio tells us, "he was a man remarkable for the large proportions and extraordinary vigour of his bodily frame, and the extreme waywardness and irascibility of his temper." *Decam* G. ix. N. 8.

The entrance is here." Upon the gates I spied  
 More than a thousand, who of old from heaven  
 Were shower'd. With ireful gestures, "Who is this,"  
 They cried, "that, without death first felt, goes through  
 The regions of the dead?" My sapient guide  
 Made sign that he for secret parley wish'd;  
 Whereat their angry scorn abating, thus  
 They spake: "Come thou alone; and let him go,  
 Who hath so hardily enter'd this realm.  
 Alone return he by his witless way;  
 If well he know it, let him prove. For thee,  
 Here shalt thou tarry, who through clime so dark  
 Hast been his escort." Now bethink thee, reader!  
 What cheer was mine at sound of those curst words.  
 I did believe I never should return.

"O my loved guide! who more than seven times<sup>1</sup>  
 Security hast render'd me, and drawn  
 From peril deep, whereto I stood exposed,  
 Desert me not," I cried, "in this extreme.  
 And, if our onward going be denied,  
 Together trace we back our steps with speed."

My liege, who thither had conducted me,  
 Replied; "Fear not: for of our passage none  
 Hath power to disappoint us, by such high  
 Authority permitted. But do thou  
 Expect me here; meanwhile, thy wearied spirit  
 Comfort, and feed with kindly hope, assured  
 I will not leave thee in this lower world."

This said, departs the sire benevolent,  
 And quits me. Hesitating I remain  
 At war, 'twixt will and will not,<sup>2</sup> in my thoughts.

<sup>1</sup> *Seven times.*] The commentators, says Venturi, perplex themselves with the inquiry what seven perils these were from which Dante had been delivered by Virgil. Reckoning the beasts in the first Canto as one of them, and adding Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Plutus, Phlegyas, and Filippo Argenti, as so many others, we shall have the number; and if this be not satisfactory, we may suppose a determinate to have been put for an indeterminate number.

<sup>2</sup> *At war, 'twixt will and will not.*] Che sì, e nò nel capo mi tenziona. Thus our Poet in his eighth Canzone:

Ch 'il sì, e'l nò tututto in vostra mano

Ha posto amore.

And Boccaccio, Ninf. Fiesol. st. 233: Il sì e il nò nel capo gli contende.

I could not hear what terms he offer'd them,  
 But they conferr'd not long, for all at once  
 Pellmell rush'd back within. Closed were the gates,  
 By those our adversaries, on the breast  
 Of my liege lord : excluded, he return'd  
 To me with tardy steps. Upon the ground  
 His eyes were bent, and from his brow erased  
 All confidence, while thus in sighs he spake :  
 " Who hath denied me these abodes of woe ? "  
 Then thus to me ; " That I am anger'd, think  
 No ground of terror : in this trial I  
 Shall vanquish, use what arts they may within  
 For hindrance. This their insolence, not new,<sup>1</sup>  
 Erewhile at gate less secret they display'd,  
 Which still is without bolt ; upon its arch  
 Thou saw'st the deadly scroll : and even now,  
 On this side of its entrance, down the steep,  
 Passing the circles, unescorted, comes  
 One whose strong might can open us this land."

## CANTO IX

## ARGUMENT

After some hindrances, and having seen the hellish furies and other monsters, the Poet, by the help of an angel, enters the city of Dis, wherein he discovers that the heretics are punished in tombs burning with intense fire : and he, together with Virgil, passes onwards between the sepulchres and the walls of the city.

THE hue,<sup>2</sup> which coward dread on my pale cheeks  
 Imprinted when I saw my guide turn back,

The words I have adopted as a translation, are Shakspeare's, Measure for Measure, a. ii. s. i.

<sup>1</sup> *This their insolence, not new.*] Virgil assures our Poet, that these evil spirits had formerly shown the same insolence when our Saviour descended into hell. They attempted to prevent him from entering at the gate, over which Dante had read the fatal inscription. "That gate which," says the Roman poet, "an angel has just passed, by whose aid we shall overcome this opposition, and gain admittance into the city." <sup>2</sup> *The hue.*] Virgil, perceiving that Dante was pale with fear, restrained those outward tokens of displeasure which his own countenance had betrayed.

Chased that from his which newly they had worn,  
 And inwardly restrain'd it. He, as one  
 Who listens, stood attentive : for his eye  
 Not far could lead him through the sable air,  
 And the thick-gathering cloud. " It yet behoves  
 We win this fight " ; thus he began : " if not,  
 Such aid to us is offer'd.—Oh ! how long  
 Me seems it, ere the promised help arrive."

I noted, how the sequel of his words  
 Cloked their beginning ; for the last he spake  
 Agreed not with the first. But not the less  
 My fear was at his saying ; sith I drew  
 To import worse, perchance, than that he held,  
 His mutilated speech. " Doth ever any  
 Into this rueful concave's extreme depth  
 Descend, out of the first degree, whose pain  
 Is deprivation merely of sweet hope ? "

Thus I inquiring. " Rarely," he replied,  
 " It chances, that among us any makes  
 This journey, which I wend. Erewhile, 'tis true,  
 Once came I here beneath, conjured by fell  
 Erictho,<sup>1</sup> sorceress, who compell'd the shades  
 Back to their bodies. No long space my flesh  
 Was naked of me,<sup>2</sup> when within these walls  
 She made me enter, to draw forth a spirit  
 From out of Judas' circle. Lowest place  
 Is that of all, obscurest, and removed  
 Furthest from heaven's all-circling orb. The road  
 Full well I know : thou therefore rest secure.  
 That lake, the noisome stench exhaling, round

<sup>1</sup> *Erichtho.*] *Erichtho*, a Thessalian sorceress, according to *Lucan*, *Pharsal*. l. vi., was employed by *Sextus*, son of *Pompey the Great*, to conjure up a spirit, who should inform him of the issue of the civil wars between his father and *Cæsar*.

<sup>2</sup> ————— *No long space my flesh  
 Was naked of me.*]

*Quæ corpus complexa animæ tam fortis inane.* *Ovid.*, *Met.* l. xiii. fab. 2. *Dante* appears to have fallen into an anachronism. *Virgil's* death did not happen till long after this period. But *Lombardi* shows, in opposition to the other commentators, that the anachronism is only apparent. *Erichtho* might well have survived the battle of *Pharsalia* long enough to be employed in her magical practices at the time of *Virgil's* decease.



The city of grief encompasses, which now  
 We may not enter without rage." Yet more  
 He added : but I hold it not in mind,  
 For that mine eye toward the lofty tower  
 Had drawn me wholly, to its burning top ;  
 Where, in an instant, I beheld uprisen  
 At once three hellish furies stain'd with blood ;  
 In limb and motion feminine they seem'd ;  
 Around them greenest hydras twisting roll'd  
 Their volumes ; adders and cerastes <sup>1</sup> crept  
 Instead of hair, and their fierce temples bound.

He, knowing well the miserable hags  
 Who tend the queen of endless woe, thus spake :  
 " Mark thou each dire Erynnis. To the left,  
 This is Megæra ; on the right hand, she  
 Who wails, Alecto ; and Tisiphone  
 I' th' midst." This said, in silence he remain'd.  
 Their breast they each one clawing tore ; themselves  
 Smote with their palms, and such shrill clamour raised,  
 That to the bard I clung, suspicion-bound.  
 " Hasten Medusa : so to adamant  
 Him shall we change " ; all looking down exclaim'd :  
 " E'en when by Theseus' might assail'd, we took  
 No ill revenge." " Turn thyself round, and keep  
 Thy countenance hid ; for if the Gorgon dire  
 Be shown, and thou shouldst view it, thy return  
 Upwards would be for ever lost." This said,  
 Himself, my gentle master, turn'd me round ;  
 Nor trusted he my hands, but with his own  
 He also hid me. Ye of intellect  
 Sound and entire, mark well the lore <sup>2</sup> conceal'd  
 Under close texture of the mystic strain.

<sup>1</sup> *Adders and cerastes.*]

Vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis. Virg., *Æn.* l. vi. 281.

spinaque vagi torquente cerastæ

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* et torrida dipsas

Ut gravis in geminum vergens caput amphibæna.

Lucan, *Pharsal.* l. ix. 719.

<sup>2</sup> *The lore.*] The Poet probably intends to call the reader's attention to the allegorical and mystic sense of the present Canto, and not, as Venturi supposes, to that of the whole work. Landino supposes this

And now there came o'er the perturbed waves  
 Loud-crashing, terrible, a sound that made  
 Either shore tremble, as if of a wind  
 Impetuous, from conflicting vapours sprung,  
 That 'gainst some forest driving all his might,  
 Plucks off the branches, beats them down, and hurls  
 Afar;<sup>1</sup> then, onward passing, proudly sweeps  
 His whirlwind rage, while beasts and shepherds fly.

Mine eyes he loosed, and spake: "And now direct  
 Thy visual nerve along that ancient foam,  
 There, thickest where the smoke ascends." As frogs  
 Before their foe the serpent, through the wave  
 Ply swiftly all, till at the ground each one  
 Lies on a heap; more than a thousand spirits  
 Destroy'd, so saw I fleeing before one  
 Who pass'd with unwet feet the Stygian sound.  
 He, from his face removing the gross air,  
 Oft his left hand forth stretch'd, and seem'd alone  
 By that annoyance wearied. I perceived  
 That he was sent from heaven; and to my guide  
 Turn'd me, who signal made, that I should stand  
 Quiet, and bend to him. Ah me! how full  
 Of noble anger seem'd he. To the gate  
 He came, and with his wand touch'd it, whereat  
 Open without impediment it flew.

"Outcasts of heaven! O abject race, and scorn'd!"  
 Began he, on the horrid grunsel standing,  
 "Whence doth this wild excess of insolence  
 Lodge in you? wherefore kick you 'gainst that will  
 Ne'er frustrate of its end, and which so oft  
 Hath laid on you enforcement of your pangs?"

hidden meaning to be, that in the case of those vices which proceed from incontinence and intemperance, reason, which is figured under the person of Virgil, with the ordinary grace of God, may be a sufficient safeguard; but that in the instance of more heinous crimes, such as those we shall hereafter see punished, a special grace, represented by the angel, is requisite for our defence.

<sup>1</sup> *Afar*.] "Porta i fiori," "carries away the blossoms," is the common reading. "Porta fuori," which is the right reading, adopted by Lombardi in his edition from the Nidobeatina, for which he claims it exclusively, I had also seen in Landino's edition of 1484, and adopted from thence, long before it was my chance to meet with Lombardi.

What profits, at the fates to butt the horn ?  
Your Cerberus,<sup>1</sup> if ye remember, hence  
Bears still, peel'd of their hair, his throat and maw."

This said, he turn'd back o'er the filthy way,  
And syllable to us spake none ; but wore  
The semblance of a man by other care  
Beset, and keenly prest, than thought of him  
Who in his presence stands. Then we our steps  
Toward that territory moved, secure  
After the hallow'd words. We, unopposed,  
There enter'd ; and, my mind eager to learn  
What state a fortress like to that might hold,  
I, soon as enter'd, throw mine eye around,  
And see, on every part, wide-stretching space,  
Replete with bitter pain and torment ill.

As where Rhone stagnates on the plains of Arles,<sup>2</sup>  
Or as at Pola,<sup>3</sup> near Quarnaro's gulf,  
That closes Italy and laves her bounds,  
The place is all thick spread with sepulchres ;  
So was it here, save what in horror here  
Excell'd : for 'midst the graves were scatter'd flames,  
Wherewith intensely all throughout they burn'd,<sup>4</sup>  
That iron for no craft there hotter needs.

<sup>1</sup> *Your Cerberus.*] Cerberus is feigned to have been dragged by Hercules, bound with a threefold chain, of which, says the angel, he still bears the marks. Lombardi blames the other interpreters for having supposed that the angel attributes this exploit to Hercules, a fabulous hero, rather than to our Saviour. It would seem as if the good father had forgotten that Cerberus is himself no less a creature of the imagination than the hero who encountered him.

<sup>2</sup> *The plains of Arles.*] In Provence. See Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* c. xxxix. t. 72 :

Fu da ogni parte in quest' ultima guerra  
(Benche la cosa non fu ugual divisa,  
Ch' assai piu andar dei Saracin sotterra  
Per man di Bradamante e di Marfisa)  
Se ne vede ancor segno in quella terra,  
Che presso ad Arli, ove il Rodano stagna,  
Piena di sepolture è la campagna.

These sepulchres are mentioned in the Life of Charlemagne, which goes under the name of Archbishop Turpin, cap. 28 and 30, and by Fazio degli Uberti, *Dittamondo*, l. iv. cap. xxi. <sup>3</sup> *At Pola.*] A city of Istria, situated near the gulf of Quarnaro, in the Adriatic sea. <sup>4</sup> *They burn'd.* Darley observes, that in the Incantation of Hervor (v. Northern Antiquities, vol. ii.) the spirit of Angantyr lies in a tomb "all on fire."

Their lids all hung suspended ; and beneath,  
From them forth issued lamentable moans,  
Such as the sad and tortured well might raise.

I thus : " Master ! say who are these, interr'd  
Within these vaults, of whom distinct we hear  
The dolorous sighs." He answer thus return'd :  
" The arch-heretics are here, accompanied  
By every sect their followers ; and much more,  
Than thou believest, the tombs are freighted : like  
With like is buried ; and the monuments  
Are different in degrees of heat." This said,  
He to the right hand turning, on we pass'd  
Betwixt the afflicted and the ramparts high.

## CANTO X

### ARGUMENT

Dante, having obtained permission from his guide, holds discourse with Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante Cavalcanti, who lie in their fiery tombs that are yet open, and not to be closed up till after the last judgment. Farinata predicts the Poet's exile from Florence ; and shows him that the condemned have knowledge of future things, but are ignorant of what is at present passing, unless it be revealed by some new comer from earth.

Now by a secret pathway we proceed,  
Between the walls, that hem the region round,  
And the tormented souls : my master first,  
I close behind his steps. " Virtue supreme ! "  
I thus began : " who through these ample orbs  
In circuit lead'st me, even as thou will'st ;  
Speak thou, and satisfy my wish. May those,  
Who lie within these sepulchres, be seen ?  
Already all the lids are raised, and none  
O'er them keeps watch." He thus in answer spake :  
" They shall be closed all, what-time they here  
From Josaphat <sup>1</sup> return'd shall come, and bring

<sup>1</sup> *Josaphat.*] It seems to have been a common opinion among the Jews, as well as among many Christians, that the general judgment will be held in the valley of Josaphat, or Jehoshaphat : " I will also

Their bodies, which above they now have left.  
 The cemetery on this part obtain,  
 With Epicurus, all his followers,  
 Who with the body make the spirit die.  
 Here therefore satisfaction shall be soon,  
 Both to the question ask'd, and to the wish <sup>1</sup>  
 Which thou conceal'st in silence." I replied :  
 " I keep not, guide beloved ! from thee my heart  
 Secreted, but to shun vain length of words ;  
 A lesson erewhile taught me by thyself."

" O Tuscan ! thou, who through the city of fire  
 Alive art passing, so discreet of speech :  
 Here, please thee, stay awhile. Thy utterance  
 Declares the place of thy nativity  
 To be that noble land, with which perchance  
 I too severely dealt." Sudden that sound  
 Forth issued from a vault, whereat, in fear,  
 I somewhat closer to my leader's side  
 Approaching, he thus spake : " What dost thou ?  
 Turn :

Lo ! Farinata <sup>2</sup> there, who hath himself  
 Uplifted : from his girdle upwards, all  
 Exposed, behold him." On his face was mine  
 Already fix'd : his breast and forehead there  
 Erecting, seem'd as in high scorn he held  
 E'en hell. Between the sepulchres, to him  
 My guide thrust me, with fearless hands and prompt ;  
 This warning added : " See thy words be clear." <sup>3</sup>

He, soon as there I stood at the tomb's foot,  
 Eyed me a space ; then in disdainful mood

gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people, and for my heritage, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." Joel iii. 2.

<sup>1</sup> *The wish.*] The wish, that Dante had not expressed, was to see and converse with the followers of Epicurus ; among whom, we shall see, were Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante Cavalcanti.

<sup>2</sup> *Farinata.*] Farinata degli Uberti, a noble Florentine, was the leader of the Ghibelline faction, when they obtained a signal victory over the Guelph at Montaperti, near the river Arbia. Macchiavelli calls him "a man of exalted soul, and great military talents." Hist. of Flor. b. ii. <sup>3</sup> Editor's note : " Le parole tue sien conte." The literal translation is : " Let thy words be counted."

Address'd me : " Say what ancestors were thine."

I, willing to obey him, straight reveal'd  
The whole, nor kept back aught : whence he, his brow  
Somewhat uplifting, cried : " Fiercely were they  
Adverse to me, my party, and the blood  
From whence I sprang : twice,<sup>1</sup> therefore, I abroad  
Scatter'd them." " Though driven out, yet they  
each time

From all parts," answer'd I, " return'd ; an art  
Which yours have shown they are not skill'd to learn."

Then, peering forth from the unclosed jaw,  
Rose from his side a shade,<sup>2</sup> high as the chin,  
Leaning, methought, upon its knees upraised.  
It look'd around, as eager to explore  
If there were other with me ; but perceiving  
That fond imagination quench'd, with tears  
Thus spake : " If thou through this blind prison  
go'st,

Led by thy lofty genius and profound,  
Where is my son ?<sup>3</sup> and wherefore not with thee ? "

I straight replied : " Not of myself I come ;  
By him, who there expects me, through this clime  
Conducted, whom perchance Guido thy son  
Had in contempt." <sup>4</sup> Already had his words

<sup>1</sup> *Twice.*] The first time in 1248, when they were driven out by Frederick the Second. See G. Villani, lib. vi. c. xxxiv.; and the second time in 1260. See note to v. 83. <sup>2</sup> *A shade.*] The spirit

of Cavalcante Cavalcanti, a noble Florentine, of the Guelph party.  
<sup>3</sup> *My son.*] Guido, the son of Cavalcante Cavalcanti; "he whom I call the first of my friends," says Dante in his *Vita Nuova*, where the commencement of their friendship is related. From the character given of him by contemporary writers, his temper was well formed to assimilate with that of our Poet. "He was," according to G. Villani, lib. viii. c. xli., "of a philosophical and elegant mind, if he had not been too delicate and fastidious." And Dino Compagni terms him "a young and noble knight, brave and courteous, but of a lofty, scornful spirit, much addicted to solitude and study." Muratori, *Rer. Ital. Script.* t. 9. lib. i. p. 481. He died, either in exile at Serazana, or soon after his return to Florence, December 1300, during the spring of which year the action of this poem is supposed to be passing.

<sup>4</sup> ————— *Guido thy son*

*Had in contempt.*] Guido Cavalcanti, being more given to philosophy than poetry, was perhaps no great admirer of Virgil. Some poetical compositions by Guido are, however, still extant; and his



And mode of punishment read me his name,  
 Whence I so fully answer'd. He at once  
 Exclaim'd, up starting, "How! said'st thou, he  
*had?*

No longer lives he? Strikes not on his eye  
 The blessed daylight?" Then, of some delay  
 I made ere my reply, aware, down fell  
 Supine, nor after forth appear'd he more.

Meanwhile the other, great of soul, near whom  
 I yet was station'd, changed not countenance stern,  
 Nor moved the neck, nor bent his ribbed side.  
 "And if," continuing the first discourse,  
 "They in this art," he cried, "small skill have  
 shown;

That doth torment me more e'en than this bed.  
 But not yet fifty times<sup>1</sup> shall be relumed  
 Her aspect, who reigns here queen of this realm,<sup>2</sup>  
 Ere thou shalt know the full weight of that art.  
 So to the pleasant world mayst thou return,<sup>3</sup>  
 As thou shalt tell me why, in all their laws,  
 Against my kin this people is so fell."

reputation for skill in the art was such as to eclipse that of his predecessor and namesake Guido Guinicelli; as we shall see in the *Purgatorio*, Canto xi., in the notes to which the reader will find specimens of the poems that have been left by each of these writers. His "*Canzone sopra il Terreno Amore*" was thought worthy of being illustrated by numerous and ample commentaries. Crescimbeni, *Ist. della Volg. Poes. lib. v.*

<sup>1</sup> *Not yet fifty times.*] "Not fifty months shall be passed, before thou shalt learn, by woeful experience, the difficulty of returning from banishment to thy native city." <sup>2</sup> *Queen of this realm.*] The moon, one of whose titles in heathen mythology, was Proserpine, queen of the shades below.

<sup>3</sup> *So to the pleasant world mayst thou return.*]

E se tu mai nel dolce mondo reggi.

Lombardi would construe this: "And if thou ever remain in the pleasant world." His chief reasons for thus departing from the common interpretation, are, first that "se" in the sense of "so" cannot be followed by "mai," any more than in Latin "sic" can be followed by "unquam"; and next, that "reggi" is too unlike "riedi" to be put for it. A more intimate acquaintance with the early Florentine writers would have taught him that "mai" is used in other senses than those which "unquam" appears to have had, particularly in that of "pur," "yet"; as may be seen in the notes to the *Decameron*, p. 43, Ed. Giunti, 1573; and that the old writers both of prose and verse changed "riedo" into "reggio," as of "fiedo" they made "feggio." *Inf. c. xv. 39, and c. xvii. v. 75.*

“The slaughter<sup>1</sup> and great havoc,” I replied,  
 “That colour’d Arbia’s flood with crimson stain—  
 To these impute, that in our hallow’d dome  
 Such orisons<sup>2</sup> ascend.” Sighing he shook  
 The head, then thus resumed: “In that affray  
 I stood not singly, nor, without just cause,  
 Assuredly, should with the rest have stirr’d;  
 But singly there I stood,<sup>3</sup> when, by consent  
 Of all, Florence had to the ground been razed,  
 The one who openly forbade the deed.”

“So may thy lineage<sup>4</sup> find at last repose,”  
 I thus adjured him, “as thou solve this knot,  
 Which now involves my mind. If right I hear,  
 Ye seem to view beforehand that which time

<sup>1</sup> *The slaughter.*] “By means of Farinata degli Uberti, the Guelphs were conquered by the army of King Manfredi, near the river Arbia, with so great a slaughter, that those who escaped from that defeat took refuge, not in Florence, which city they considered as lost to them, but in Lucca.” Macchiavelli, *Hist. of Flor.* b. ii., and G. Villani, lib. vi. c. lxxx. and lxxxi.

<sup>2</sup> *Such orisons.*] This appears to allude to certain prayers which were offered up in the churches of Florence, for deliverance from the hostile attempts of the Uberti: or, it may be, that the public councils being held in churches, the speeches delivered in them against the Uberti are termed “orisons,” or prayers.

<sup>3</sup> *Singly there I stood.*] Guido Novello assembled a council of the Ghibellini at Empoli; where it was agreed by all, that, in order to maintain the ascendancy of the Ghibelline party in Tuscany, it was necessary to destroy Florence, which could serve only (the people of that city being Guelphs) to enable the party attached to the church to recover its strength. This cruel sentence, passed upon so noble a city, met with no opposition from any of its citizens or friends, except Farinata degli Uberti, who openly and without reserve forbade the measure; affirming, that he had endured so many hardships, and encountered so many dangers, with no other view than that of being able to pass his days in his own country. Macchiavelli, *Hist. of Flor.* b. ii.

<sup>4</sup> *So may thy lineage.*] Deh se riposi mai vostra semenza. Here Lombardi is again mistaken, as at v. 80, above. Let me take this occasion to apprise the reader of Italian poetry, that one not well versed in it is very apt to misapprehend the word “se,” as I think Cowper has done in translating Milton’s Italian verses. A good instance of the different meanings, in which it is used, is afforded in the following lines by Bernardo Capello:—

E tu, che dolcemente i fiori e l’erba  
 Con lieve corso mormorando bagni,  
 Tranquillo fiume di vaghezza pieno;  
 Se’l cielo al mar sì chiaro t’accompagni;  
 Se punto di pietade in te si serba:  
 Le mie lagrime accogli entro al tuo seno.

Here the first “se” signifies “so,” and the second “if.”

Leads with him, of the present uninform'd."

"We view,<sup>1</sup> as one who hath an evil sight,"  
He answer'd, "plainly, objects far remote ;  
So much of his large splendour yet imparts  
The Almighty Ruler : but when they approach,  
Or actually exist, our intellect  
Then wholly fails ; nor of your human state,  
Except what others bring us, know we aught.  
Hence therefore mayst thou understand, that all  
Our knowledge in that instant shall expire,  
When on futurity the portals close."

Then conscious of my fault,<sup>2</sup> and by remorse  
Smitten, I added thus : "Now shalt thou say  
To him there fallen, that his offspring still  
Is to the living join'd ; and bid him know,  
That if from answer, silent, I abstain'd,  
'Twas that my thought was occupied, intent  
Upon that error, which thy help hath solved."

But now my master summoning me back  
I heard, and with more eager haste besought  
The spirit to inform me, who with him  
Partook his lot. He answer thus return'd :  
"More than a thousand with me here are laid.  
Within is Frederick,<sup>3</sup> second of that name,  
And the Lord Cardinal ;<sup>4</sup> and of the rest

<sup>1</sup> *We view.*] "The departed spirits know things past and to come ; yet are ignorant of things present. Agamemnon foretells what should happen unto Ulysses, yet ignorantly inquires what is become of his own son." Brown on *Urne Burial*, ch. iv. <sup>2</sup> *My fault.*] Dante felt remorse for not having returned an immediate answer to the inquiry of Cavalcante, from which delay he was led to believe that his son Guido was no longer living. <sup>3</sup> *Frederick.*] The Emperor Frederick the Second, who died in 1250. See notes to Canto xiii. <sup>4</sup> *The Lord Cardinal.*] Ottaviano Ubaldini, a Florentine, made cardinal in 1245, and deceased about 1273. On account of his great influence, he was generally known by the appellation of "the Cardinal." It is reported of him, that he declared, if there were any such thing as a human soul, he had lost his for the Ghibellini. "I know not," says Tiraboschi, "whether it is on sufficient grounds that Crescimbeni numbers among the poets of this age the Cardinal Uttaviano, or Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, a Florentine, archdeacon and procurator of the church of Bologna, afterwards made Cardinal by Innocent iv. in 1245, and employed in the most important public affairs, wherein, however, he showed himself, more than became his character, a favourite of the Ghibellines. He died, not in the year 1272, as Cia-

I speak not." He, this said, from sight withdrew.  
 But I my steps toward the ancient bard  
 Reverting, ruminated on the words  
 Betokening me such ill. Onward he moved,  
 And thus, in going, question'd : " Whence the amaze  
 That holds thy senses wrapt ? " I satisfied  
 The inquiry, and the sage enjoin'd me straight :  
 " Let thy safe memory store what thou hast heard  
 To thee importing harm ; and note thou this,"  
 With his raised finger bidding me take heed,  
 " When thou shalt stand before her gracious beam,<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose bright eye all surveys, she of thy life  
 The future tenour will to thee unfold."

Forthwith he to the left hand turn'd his feet :  
 We left the wall, and towards the middle space  
 Went by a path that to a valley strikes,  
 Which e'en thus high exhaled its noisome steam.

## CANTO XI

### ARGUMENT

Dante arrives at the verge of a rocky precipice which encloses the seventh circle, where he sees the sepulchre of Anastasius the Heretic ; behind the lid of which, pausing a little, to make himself capable by degrees of enduring the fetid smell that steamed upward from the abyss, he is instructed by Virgil concerning the manner in which the three following circles are disposed, and what description of sinners is punished in each. He then inquires the reason why the carnal, the gluttonous, the avaricious and prodigal, the wrathful and gloomy, suffer not their punishments within the city of Dis. He next asks how the crime of usury is an offence against God ; and at length the two Poets go towards the place from whence a passage leads down to the seventh circle.

UPON the utmost verge of a high bank,  
 By craggy rocks environ'd round, we came,  
 Where woes beneath, more cruel yet, were stow'd  
 And here, to shun the horrible excess

conio and other writers have reported, but at soonest after the July of 1273, at which time he was in Mugello with Pope Gregory x." Tiraboschi, Della Poes. It. Mathias's Edit. t. i. p. 140.

<sup>1</sup> *Her gracious beam.*] Beatrice.

Of fetid exhalation upward cast  
 From the profound abyss, behind the lid  
 Of a great monument we stood retired,  
 Whereon this scroll I mark'd: "I have in charge  
 Pope Anastasius,<sup>1</sup> whom Photinus drew  
 From the right path."—"Ere our descent, behoves  
 We make delay, that somewhat first the sense,  
 To the dire breath accustom'd, afterward  
 Regard it not." My master thus; to whom  
 Answering I spake: "Some compensation find,  
 That the time pass not wholly lost." He then:  
 "Lo! how my thoughts e'en to thy wishes tend.  
 My son!<sup>2</sup> within these rocks," he thus began,  
 "Are three close circles in gradation placed,  
 As these which now thou leavest. Each one is full  
 Of spirits accurst; but that the sight alone  
 Hereafter may suffice thee, listen how  
 And for what cause in durance they abide.

"Of all malicious act abhorr'd in heaven,  
 The end is injury; and all such end  
 Either by force or fraud<sup>3</sup> works other's woe.  
 But fraud, because of man peculiar evil,  
 To God is more displeasing; and beneath,  
 The fraudulent are therefore doom'd to endure  
 Severer pang. The violent occupy  
 All the first circle; and because, to force,  
 Three persons are obnoxious,<sup>4</sup> in three rounds,  
 Each within other separate, is it framed.

<sup>1</sup> *Pope Anastasius.*] The commentators are not agreed concerning the person who is here mentioned as a follower of the heretical Photinus. By some he is supposed to have been Anastasius the Second; by others, the Fourth of that name; while a third set, jealous of the integrity of the papal faith, contend that our Poet has confounded him with Anastasius I., Emperor of the East. <sup>2</sup> *My son.*] The remainder of the present Canto may be considered as a syllabus of the whole of this part of the poem. <sup>3</sup> *Either by force or fraud.*] "Cum autem duobus modis, id est, aut vi, aut fraude, fiat injuria . . . utrumque homini alienissimum; sed fraus odio digna majore." Cic. de Off. lib. i. c. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Editor's note: Cary's translation of this passage is very obscure:

"De violenti il primo cerchio è tutto;  
 ma perchè si fa forza a tre persone,  
 in tre gironi è distinto e costruito."

"The first circle is all of the violent. But because violence can be done to three persons, it is formed and divided into three rounds."

To God, his neighbour, and himself, by man  
 Force may be offer'd ; to himself I say,  
 And his possessions, as thou soon shalt hear  
 At full. Death, violent death, and painful wounds  
 Upon his neighbour he inflicts ; and wastes,  
 By devastation, pillage, and the flames,  
 His substance. Slayers, and each one that smites  
 In malice, plunderers, and all robbers, hence  
 The torment undergo of the first round,  
 In different herds. Man can do violence  
 To himself and his own blessings : and for this,  
 He, in the second round must aye deplore  
 With unavailing penitence his crime,  
 Whoe'er deprives himself of life and light,  
 In reckless lavishment his talent wastes,  
 And sorrows there where he should dwell in joy  
 To God may force be offer'd, in the heart  
 Denying and blaspheming His high power,  
 And Nature with her kindly law contemning.  
 And thence the inmost round marks with its seal  
 Sodom, and Cahors,<sup>1</sup> and all such as speak  
 Contemptuously of the Godhead in their hearts.

“ Fraud, that in every conscience leaves a sting  
 May be by man employ'd on one, whose trust  
 He wins, or on another who withholds  
 Strict confidence. Seems as the latter way  
 Broke but the bond of love which Nature makes.  
 Whence in the second circle have their nest,  
 Dissimulation, witchcraft, flatteries,  
 Theft, falsehood, simony, all who seduce  
 To lust, or set their honesty at pawn,  
 With such vile scum as these. The other way  
 Forgets both Nature's general love, and that  
 Which thereto added afterward gives birth  
 To special faith. Whence in the lesser circle,  
 Point of the universe, dread seat of Dis,  
 The traitor is eternally consumed.”

I thus : “ Instructor, clearly thy discourse  
 Proceeds, distinguishing the hideous chasm

<sup>1</sup> *Cahors.*] A city of Guienne, much frequented by usurers.



And its inhabitants with skill exact.  
 But tell me this : they of the dull, fat pool,  
 Whom the rain beats, or whom the tempest drives,  
 Or who with tongues so fierce conflicting meet,  
 Wherefore within the city fire-illumed  
 Are not these punish'd, if God's wrath be on them ?  
 And if it be not, wherefore in such guise  
 Are they condemn'd ? " He answer thus return'd :  
 " Wherefore in dotage wanders thus thy mind,  
 Not so accusom'd ? or what other thoughts  
 Possess it ? Dwell not in thy memory  
 The words, wherein thy ethic page <sup>1</sup> describes  
 Three dispositions adverse to Heaven's will,  
 Incontinence, malice, and mad brutishness,  
 And how incontinence the least offends  
 God, and least guilt incurs ? If well thou note  
 This judgment, and remember who they are,  
 Without these walls to vain repentance doom'd,  
 Thou shalt discern why they apart are placed  
 From these fell spirits, and less wreakful pours  
 Justice divine on them its vengeance down."

" O sun ! who healest all imperfect sight,  
 Thou so content'st me, when thou solvest my doubt,  
 That ignorance not less than knowledge charms.  
 Yet somewhat turn thee back," I in these words  
 Continued, " where thou said'st, that usury  
 Offends celestial Goodness ; and this knot  
 Perplex'd unravel." He thus made reply :  
 " Philosophy, to an attentive ear,  
 Clearly points out, not in one part alone,  
 How imitative Nature takes her course  
 From the celestial mind, and from its art :  
 And where her laws <sup>2</sup> the Stagirite unfolds,  
 Not many leaves scan'd over, observing well

<sup>1</sup> *Thy ethic page.*] He refers to Aristotle's Ethics : " Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα λεπτέον, ἄλλην ποιησαμένον ἄρεσιν, ὅτι τῶν περὶ τὰ ἥθη περὶ τῶν τρία ἐστὶν ἴδη, κακία, ἀκρασία, θηριότης." *Ethic. Nicomache. vii. c. 3.* " In the next place, entering on another division of the subject, let it be defined, that respecting morals there are three sorts of things to be avoided, malice, incontinence, and brutishness." <sup>2</sup> *Her laws.*] Aristotle's Physics.— " Ἡ τέχνη μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν." Arist. *Φυσ. AKP. lib. ii. c. 2.* " Art imitates nature."

Thou shalt discover, that your art on her  
 Obsequious follows, as the learner treads  
 In his instructor's step ; so that your art  
 Deserves the name of second in descent  
 From God. These two, if thou recall to mind  
 Creation's holy book,<sup>1</sup> from the beginning  
 Were the right source of life and excellence  
 To human kind. But in another path  
 The usurer walks ; and Nature in herself  
 And in her follower thus he sets at nought,  
 Placing elsewhere his hope.<sup>2</sup> But follow now  
 My steps on forward journey bent ; for now  
 The Pisces play with undulating glance  
 Along the horizon, and the Wain<sup>3</sup> lies all  
 O'er the north-west ; and onward there a space  
 Is our steep passage down the rocky height."

## CANTO XII

### ARGUMENT

Descending by a very rugged way into the seventh circle, where the violent are punished, Dante and his leader find it guarded by the Minotaur ; whose fury being pacified by Virgil, they step downwards from crag to crag ; till, drawing near the bottom, they descry a river of blood, wherein are tormented such as have committed violence against their neighbour. At these, when they strive to emerge from the blood, a troop of Centaurs, running along the side of the river, aim their arrows ; and three of their band opposing our travellers at the foot of the steep, Virgil prevails so far, that one consents to carry them both across the stream ; and on their passage, Dante is informed by him of the course of the river, and of those that are punished therein.

THE place, where to descend the precipice  
 We came, was rough as Alp ; and on its verge

<sup>1</sup> *Creation's holy book.*] Gen. c. ii. v. 15 : "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it." And, Gen. c. iii. v. 19 : "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

<sup>2</sup> *Placing elsewhere his hope.*] The usurer, trusting in the produce of his wealth lent out on usury, despises nature directly, because he does not avail himself of her means for maintaining or enriching himself ; and indirectly, because he does not avail himself of the means which art, the follower and imitator of nature, would afford him for the same purposes.

<sup>3</sup> *The Wain.*] The constellation Boötes, or Charles's Wain.

Such object lay, as every eye would shun.

As is that ruin, which Adice's stream<sup>1</sup>  
On this side Trento struck, shouldering the wave,  
Or loosed by earthquake or for lack of prop;  
For from the mountain's summit, whence it moved  
To the low level, so the headlong rock  
Is shiver'd, that some passage<sup>2</sup> it might give  
To him who from above would pass; e'en such  
Into the chasm was that descent: and there  
At point of the disparted ridge lay stretch'd  
The infamy of Crete,<sup>3</sup> detested brood  
Of the feign'd heifer:<sup>4</sup> and at sight of us  
It gnaw'd itself, as one with rage distract.  
To him my guide exclaim'd: "Perchance thou deem'st  
The King of Athens<sup>5</sup> here, who, in the world  
Above, thy death contrived. Monster! avaunt!  
He comes not tutor'd by thy sister's art,<sup>6</sup>  
But to behold your torments is he come."

Like to a bull,<sup>7</sup> that with impetuous spring  
Darts, at the moment when the fatal blow  
Hath struck him, but unable to proceed  
Plunges on either side; so saw I plunge  
The Minotaur; whereat the sage exclaim'd:  
"Run to the passage! while he storms, 'tis well  
That thou descend." Thus down our road we took  
Through those dilapidated crags, that oft

<sup>1</sup> *Adice's stream.*] After a great deal having been said on the subject, it still appears very uncertain at what part of the river this fall of the mountain happened. <sup>2</sup> *Some passage.*] Lombardi erroneously, I think, understands by "alcuna via" "no passage"; in which sense "alcuno" is certainly sometimes used by some old writers. Monti, as usual, agrees with Lombardi. See note to c. iii. v. 40. <sup>3</sup> *The infamy of Crete.*] The Minotaur. <sup>4</sup> *The feign'd heifer.*] Pasiphae. <sup>5</sup> *The King of Athens.*] Theseus, who was enabled by the instruction of Ariadne, the sister of the Minotaur, to destroy that monster. <sup>6</sup> *Thy sister's art.*] Ariadne.

<sup>7</sup> *Like to a bull.*]

'Ως δ' ἵτα· ὁ δὲ ἔχων τίλειται αἰζήεις ἀνὴρ,

Κό' ας ἐξόπιθεν κίραον βοὸς ἀγραύλοιο,

"Ἰνα τάμῃ διὰ πᾶσαν, ὁ δὲ προβορῶν ἐρίπησιν.

Homer, Il. l. xvii. 522.

As when some vigorous youth with sharpen'd axe  
A pastured bullock smites behind the horns,  
And hews the muscle through; he at the stroke  
Springs forth and falls. Cowper's Translation.

Moved underneath my feet, to weight like theirs  
 Unused. I pondering went, and thus he spake :  
 " Perhaps thy thoughts are of this ruin'd steep,  
 Guarded by the brute violence, which I  
 Have vanquish'd now. Know then, that when I erst  
 Hither descended to the nether hell,  
 This rock was not yet fallen. But past doubt,  
 (If well I mark) not long ere He arrived,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who carried off from Dis the mighty spoil  
 Of the highest circle, then through all its bounds  
 Such trembling seized the deep concave and foul,  
 I thought the universe was thrill'd with love,  
 Whereby, there are who deem, the world hath oft  
 Been into chaos turn'd : <sup>2</sup> and in that point,  
 Here, and elsewhere, that old rock toppled down.  
 But fix thine eyes beneath : the river of blood <sup>3</sup>  
 Approaches, in the which all those are steep'd,  
 Who have by violence injured." O blind lust !  
 O foolish wrath ! who so dost goad us on  
 In the brief life, and in the eternal then  
 Thus miserably o'erwhelm us. I beheld  
 An ample foss, that in a bow was bent,  
 As circling all the plain ; for so my guide  
 Had told. Between it and the rampart's base,  
 On trail ran Centaurs, with keen arrows arm'd,  
 As to the chase they on the earth were wont.

At seeing us descend they each one stood ;  
 And issuing from the troop, three sped with bows  
 And missile weapons chosen first ; of whom  
 One cried from far : " Say, to what pain ye come  
 Condemn'd, who down this steep have journey'd.

Speak

From whence ye stand, or else the bow I draw."

<sup>1</sup> *He arrived.*] Our Saviour, who, according to Dante, when He ascended from hell, carried with Him the souls of the Patriarchs, and of other just men, out of the first circle. See Canto iv. <sup>2</sup> *Been into chaos turn'd.*] This opinion is attributed to Empedocles. <sup>3</sup> *The river of blood.*] *Deinde vidi locum (Qu. lacum ?) magnum totum, ut mihi videbatur, plenum sanguine. Sed dixit mihi Apostolus, sed non sanguis, sed ignis est ad concremandos homicidas, et odiosos deputatus. Hanc tamen similitudinem propter sanguinis effusionem retinet. Alberici, Visio, § 7.*

To whom my guide : " Our answer shall be made  
 To Chiron, there, when nearer him we come.  
 Ill was thy mind, thus ever quick and rash."  
 Then me he touch'd, and spake : " Nessus is this,  
 Who for the fair Deïanira died,  
 And wrought himself revenge <sup>1</sup> for his own fate.  
 He in the midst, that on his breast looks down,  
 Is the great Chiron who Achilles nursed ;  
 That other, Pholus, prone to wrath." Around  
 The foss these go by thousands, aiming shafts  
 At whatsoever spirit dares emerge <sup>2</sup>  
 From out the blood, more than his guilt allows.

We to those beasts, that rapid strode along,  
 Drew near ; when Chiron took an arrow forth,  
 And with the notch push'd back his shaggy beard  
 To the cheek-bone, then, his great mouth to view  
 Exposing, to his fellows thus exclaim'd :  
 " Are ye aware, that he who comes behind  
 Moves what he touches ? The feet of the dead  
 Are not so wont." My trusty guide, who now  
 Stood near his breast, where the two natures join,  
 Thus made reply : " He is indeed alive,  
 And solitary so must needs by me  
 Be shown the gloomy vale, thereto induced  
 By strict necessity, not by delight.  
 She left her joyful harpings in the sky,  
 Who this new office to my care consign'd.  
 He is no robber, no dark spirit I.  
 But by that virtue, which empowers my step  
 To tread so wild a path, grant us, I pray,  
 One of thy band, whom we may trust secure.  
 Who to the ford may lead us, and convey

<sup>1</sup> *And wrought himself revenge.*] Nessus, when dying by the hand of Hercules, charged Deïanira to preserve the gore from his wound ; for that if the affections of Hercules should at any time be estranged from her, it would act as a charm, and recall them. Deïanira had occasion to try the experiment ; and the venom acting, as Nessus had intended, caused Hercules to expire in torments. See the Trachiniæ of Sophocles. <sup>2</sup> *Emerge.*] Multos in eis vidi usque ad talos demergi, alios usque ad genua, vel femora, alios usque ad pectus juxta peccati vidi modum : alios vero qui majoris criminis noxa tenebantur in ipsis summitatibus supersedere conspexi. Alberici, Visio, § 3.

Across, him mounted on his back ; for he  
Is not a spirit that may walk the air."

Then on his right breast turning, Chiron thus  
To Nessus <sup>1</sup> spake : " Return, and be their guide.  
And if ye chance to cross another troop,  
Command them keep aloof." Onward we moved,  
The faithful escort by our side, along  
The border of the crimson seething-flood,  
Whence, from those steep'd within, loud shrieks arose.

Some there I mark'd, as high as to their brow  
Immersed, of whom the mighty Centaur thus :  
" These are the souls of tyrants, who were given  
To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud  
Their merciless wrongs. Here Alexander dwells,  
And Dionysius fell, who many a year  
Of woe wrought for fair Sicily. That brow,  
Whereon the hair so jetty clustering hangs,  
Is Azzolino ; <sup>2</sup> that with flaxen flocks  
Obizzo <sup>3</sup> of Este, in the world destroy'd  
By his foul step-son." To the bard revered  
I turn'd me round, and thus he spake : " Let him  
Be to thee now first leader, me but next  
To him in rank." Then further on a space  
The Centaur paused, near some, who at the throat  
Were extant from the wave ; and, showing us

<sup>1</sup> *Nessus.*] Our Poet was probably induced, by the following line in Ovid, to assign to Nessus the task of conducting them over the ford :

Nessus adit membrisque valens scitusque vadorum. *Metam.* l. ix.  
And Ovid's authority was Sophocles, who says of this Centaur :

"Ος τὸν βαθύρρουν ποταμὸν Εὐήνον βροτῶδες

Μισθοῦ πόρουε χερσὶν οὔτε πομπήμοις

Κώπαις ἑρέσσαν, οὔτε λαιφεσὶν νεώς. *Trach.* 570.

He in his arms, across Evenus' stream  
Deep-flowing, bore the passenger for hire,  
Without or sail or billow-cleaving oar.

<sup>2</sup> *Azzolino.*] Azzolino, or Ezzolino di Romano, a most cruel tyrant in the Marca Trivigiana, Lord of Padua, Vicenza, Verona, and Brescia, who died in 1260. His atrocities form the subject of a Latin tragedy, called *Eccerinis*, by Albertino Mussato, of Padua, the contemporary of Dante, and the most elegant writer of Latin verse of that age. See also the *Paradiso*, Canto ix. <sup>3</sup> *Obizzo of Este.*] Marquis of Ferrara and of the Marca d'Ancona, was murdered by his own son (whom, for that most unnatural act, Dante calls his step-son) for the sake of the treasures which his rapacity had amassed. He died in 1293, according to Gibbon, *Ant. of the House of Brunswick*, *Posth. Works*, v. ii. 4to.



A spirit by itself apart retired,  
Exclaim'd : " He <sup>1</sup> in God's bosom smote the heart,  
Which yet is honour'd on the bank of Thames."

A race I next espied who held the head,  
And even all the bust, above the stream.  
'Midst these I many a face remember'd well.  
Thus shallow more and more the blood became,  
So that at last it but imbrued the feet ;  
And there our passage lay athwart the foss.

" As ever on this side the boiling wave  
Thou seest diminishing," the Centaur said,  
" So on the other, be thou well assured,  
It lower still and lower sinks its bed,  
Till in that part it re-uniting join,  
Where 'tis the lot of tyranny to mourn.  
There Heaven's stern justice lays chastising hand  
On Attila, who was the scourge of earth,  
On Sextus and on Pyrrhus,<sup>2</sup> and extracts  
Tears ever by the seething flood unlock'd  
From the Rinieri, of Corneto this,  
Pazzo the other named,<sup>3</sup> who fill'd the ways  
With violence and war." This said, he turn'd.  
And quitting us, alone repass'd the ford.

<sup>1</sup> *He.*] " Henrie, the brother of this Edmund, and son to the fore-said king of Almaine (Richard, brother of Henry III. of England), as he returned from Affrike, where he had been with Prince Edward, was slain at Viterbo in Italy (whither he was come about business which he had to do with the Pope) by the hand of Guy de Montfort, the son of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, in revenge of the same Simon's death. The murther was committed afore the high altar, as the same Henrie kneeled there to hear divine service." A.D. 1272. Holinshed's Chron. p. 275. See also Giov. Villani, Hist. lib. vii. c. xl., where it is said "that the heart of Henry was put into a golden cup, and placed on a pillar at London bridge over the river Thames, for a memorial to the English of the said outrage." Lombardi suggests that " ancor si cola " in the text may mean, not that " the heart was still honoured," but that it was put into a perforated cup in order that the blood dripping from it might excite the spectators to revenge. This is surely too improbable. <sup>2</sup> *On Sextus and on Pyrrhus.*] Sextus, either the son of Tarquin the Proud, or of Pompey the Great ; and Pyrrhus king of Epirus.

<sup>3</sup> ——— *The Rinieri, of Corneto this,  
Pazzo the other named.*———]

Two noted marauders, by whose depredations the public ways in Italy were infested. The latter was of the noble family of Pazzi in Florence.

## CANTO XIII

## ARGUMENT

Still in the seventh circle, Dante enters its second compartment, which contains both those who have done violence on their own persons and those who have violently consumed their goods; the first changed into rough and knotted trees whereon the harpies build their nests, the latter chased and torn by black female mastiffs. Among the former, Piero delle Vigne is one who tells him the cause of his having committed suicide, and moreover in what manner the souls are transformed into those trunks. Of the latter crew, he recognises Lano, a Sienese, and Giacomo, a Paduan; and lastly, a Florentine, who had hung himself from his own roof, speaks to him of the calamities of his countrymen.

ERE Nessus yet had reach'd the other bank,  
We enter'd on a forest,<sup>1</sup> where no track  
Of steps had worn a way. Not verdant there  
The foliage, but of dusky due; not light  
The boughs and tapering, but with knares deform'd  
And matted thick: fruits there were none, but thorns  
Instead, with venom fill'd. Less sharp than these,  
Less intricate the brakes, wherein abide  
Those animals, that hate the cultured fields,  
Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.<sup>2</sup>

Here the brute Harpies make their nest, the same  
Who from the Strophades<sup>3</sup> the Trojan band  
Drove with dire boding of their future woe.  
Broad are their pennons,<sup>4</sup> of the human form  
Their neck and countenance, arm'd with talons keen  
The feet, and the huge belly fledged with wings.  
These sit and wail on the drear mystic wood.

The kind instructor in these words began:

<sup>1</sup> *A forest.*] Inde in aliam vallem nimis terribiliorem deveni plenam subtilissimis arboribus in modum hastarum sexaginta brachiorum longitudinem habentibus, quarum omnium capita, ac si sudes acutissima erant, et spinosa. Alberici, Visio, § 4. <sup>2</sup> *Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.*] A wild and woody tract of country, abounding in deer, goats, and wild boars. Cecina is a river not far to the south of Leghorn; Corneto, a small city on the same coast, in the patrimony of the church. <sup>3</sup> *The Strophades.*] See Virg., Æn. lib. iii. 210.

<sup>4</sup> *Broad are their pennons.*]

Virginei volucrum vultus, foedissima ventris  
Proluvies, uncæque manus et pallida semper  
Ora fame.—

Virg., Æn. lib. iii. 216.

" Ere further thou proceed, know thou art now  
 I' th' second round, and shalt be, till thou come  
 Upon the horrid sand : look therefore well  
 Around thee, and such things thou shalt behold,  
 As would my speech discredit." <sup>1</sup> On all sides  
 I heard sad plainings breathe, and none could see  
 From whom they might have issued. In amaze  
 Fast bound I stood. He, as it seem'd, believed  
 That I had thought so many voices came  
 From some amid those thickets close conceal'd,  
 And thus his speech resumed : " If thou lop off  
 A single twig from one of those ill plants,  
 The thought thou hast conceived shall vanish quite."

Thereat a little stretching forth my hand,  
 From a great wilding gather'd I a branch,  
 And straight the trunk exclaim'd ; " Why pluck'st  
 thou me ? "

Then, as the dark blood trickled down its side,  
 These words it added : " Wherefore tear'st me thus ?  
 Is there no touch of mercy in thy breast ?  
 Men once were we, that now are rooted here.  
 Thy hand might well have spared us, had we been  
 The souls of serpents." As a brand yet green,  
 That burning at one end from the other sends  
 A groaning sound, and hisses with the wind  
 That forces out its way, so burst at once  
 Forth from the broken splinter words and blood.

I, letting fall the bough, remain'd as one  
 Assail'd by terror ; and the sage replied :  
 " If he, O injured spirit ! could have believed  
 What he hath seen but in my verse described," <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note : "Vedrai cose che torrien fede al mio sermone."  
 In some editions the word "daran" is substituted for "torrien."  
 This reverses the meaning, and the phrase would then stand thus :  
 "Thou shalt see things which will prove my words." This seems  
 to me the only logical reading since Virgil had indeed related a very  
 similar story in the *Æneid*. In the third book Æneas tells how blood  
 dripped from a branch of a fine myrtle as he strove to break it, and how  
 the voice of dead Polydorus, who was buried in that place, moaned  
 reproaches among the leaves. See next note, where Cary expresses  
 this opinion himself. <sup>2</sup> *In my verse described.*] The commentators  
 explain this, "If he could have believed, in consequence of my  
 assurances alone, that of which he hath now had ocular proof,

He never against thee had stretch'd his hand.  
 But I, because the thing surpass'd belief,  
 Prompted him to this deed, which even now  
 Myself I rue. But tell me, who thou wast ;  
 That, for this wrong to do thee some amends,  
 In the upper world (for thither to return  
 Is granted him) thy fame he may revive."  
 "That pleasant word of thine,"<sup>1</sup> the trunk replied,  
 "Hath so inveigled me, that I from speech  
 Cannot refrain, wherein if I indulge  
 A little longer, in the snare detain'd,  
 Count it not grievous. I it was,<sup>2</sup> who held  
 Both keys to Frederick's heart, and turn'd the wards,  
 Opening and shutting, with a skill so sweet,  
 That besides me, into his inmost breast  
 Scarce any other could admittance find.  
 The faith I bore to my high charge was such,  
 It cost me the life-blood that warm'd my veins.  
 The harlot,<sup>3</sup> who ne'er turn'd her gloating eyes  
 From Cæsar's household, common vice and pest  
 Of courts, 'gainst me inflamed the minds of all ;  
 And to Augustus they so spread the flame,  
 That my glad honours changed to bitter woes.

he would not have stretched forth his hand against thee." But I am of opinion that Dante makes Virgil allude to his own story of Polydorus, in the third book of the *Æneid*.

<sup>1</sup> *That pleasant word of thine.*] "Since you have inveigled me to speak by holding forth so gratifying an expectation, let it not displease you if I am as it were detained in the snare you have spread for me, so as to be somewhat prolix in my answer." <sup>2</sup> *I it was.*] Piero delle Vigne, a native of Capua, who from a low condition raised himself, by his eloquence and legal knowledge, to the office of Chancellor to the Emperor Frederick II. ; whose confidence in him was such, that his influence in the empire became unbounded. The courtiers, envious of his exalted situation, contrived, by means of forged letters, to make Frederick believe that he held a secret and traitorous intercourse with the Pope, who was then at enmity with the emperor. In consequence of this supposed crime, he was cruelly condemned, by his too credulous sovereign, to lose his eyes ; and being driven to despair by his unmerited calamity and disgrace, he put an end to his life by dashing out his brains against the walls of a church, in the year 1245. Both Frederick and Piero delle Vigne composed verses in the Sicilian dialect, which are now extant. A canzone by each of them may be seen in the ninth book of the *Sonetti and Canzoni di diversi Autori Toscani*, published by the Giunti in 1527. <sup>3</sup> *The harlot.*] Envy.

My soul, disdainful and disgusted, sought  
Refuge in death from scorn, and I became,  
Just as I was, unjust toward myself.  
By the new roots, which fix this stem, I swear,  
That never faith I broke to my liege lord,  
Who merited such honour ; and of you,  
If any to the world indeed return,  
Clear he from wrong my memory, that lies  
Yet prostrate under envy's cruel blow."

First somewhat pausing, till the mournful words  
Were ended, then to me the bard began :

" Lose not the time ; but speak, and of him ask,  
If more thou wish to learn." Whence I replied :

" Question thou him again of whatso'er  
Will, as thou think'st, content me ; for no power  
Have I to ask, such pity is at my heart."

He thus resumed : " So may he do for thee  
Freely what thou entreatest, as thou yet  
Be pleased, imprison'd spirit ! to declare,  
How in these gnarled joints the soul is tied ;  
And whether any ever from such frame  
Be loosen'd, if thou canst, that also tell."

Thereat the trunk breathed hard, and the wind soon  
Changed into sounds articulate like these :

" Briefly ye shall be answer'd. When departs  
The fierce soul from the body, by itself  
Thence torn asunder, to the seventh gulf  
By Minos doom'd, into the wood it falls,  
No place assign'd, but wheresoever chance  
Hurls it ; there sprouting, as a grain of spelt,  
It rises to a sapling, growing thence  
A savage plant. - The Harpies, on its leaves  
Then feeding, cause both pain, and for the pain  
A vent to grief. We, as the rest, shall come  
For our own spoils, yet not so that with them  
We may again be clad ; for what a man  
Takes from himself it is not just he have.  
Here we perforce shall drag them ; and throughout  
The dismal glade our bodies shall be hung,  
Each on the wild thorn of his wretched shade."

Attentive yet to listen to the trunk  
 We stood, expecting further speech, when us  
 A noise surprised ; as when a man perceives  
 The wild boar and the hunt approach his place  
 Of station'd watch, who of the beasts and boughs  
 Loud rustling round him hears. And lo ! there came  
 Two naked, torn with briers, in headlong flight,  
 That they before them broke each fan o' th' wood.<sup>1</sup>  
 " Haste now," the foremost cried, " now haste thee,  
 death ! "

The other, as seem'd, impatient of delay,  
 Exclaiming, " Lano ! <sup>2</sup> not so bent for speed  
 Thy sinews, in the lists of Toppo's field."  
 And then, for that perchance no longer breath  
 Sufficed him, of himself and of a bush  
 One group he made. Behind them was the wood  
 Full of black female mastiffs, gaunt and fleet,  
 As greyhounds that have newly slipt the leash,  
 On him, who squatted down, they stuck their fangs,  
 And having rent him piecemeal bore away  
 The tortured limbs. My guide then seized my hand,  
 And led me to the thicket, which in vain  
 Mourn'd through its bleeding wounds : " O Giacomo  
 Of Sant' Andrea ! <sup>3</sup> what avails it thee,"  
 It cried, " that of me thou hast made thy screen ?  
 For thy ill life, what blame on me recoils ? "

When o'er it he had paused, my master spake :  
 " Say who wast thou, that at so many points  
 Breathest out with blood thy lamentable speech ? "

He answer'd : " O ye spirits ! arrived in time  
 To spy the shameful havoc that from me  
 My leaves hath sever'd thus, gather them up,

<sup>1</sup> *Each fan o' th' wood.*] Some have translated "rosta" "impediment" instead of "fan." <sup>2</sup> *Lano.*] Lano, a Sieneſe, who being reduced by prodigality to a ſtate of extreme want, found his exiſtence no longer ſupportable ; and having been ſent by his countrymen on a military expedition to aſſiſt the Florentines againſt the Aretini, took that opportunity of expoſing himſelf to certain death, in the engagement which took place at Toppo near Arezzo. See G. Villani, *Hist. lib. vii. c. cxix.*

<sup>3</sup> ——— O Giacomo

*Of Sant' Andrea !*] Jacopo da Sant' Andrea, a Paduan, who, having waſted his property in the moſt wanton acts of profuſion, killed himſelf in deſpair.



And at the foot of their sad parent-tree  
 Carefully lay them. In that city <sup>1</sup> I dwelt,  
 Who for the Baptist her first patron changed,  
 Whence he for this shall cease not with his art  
 To work her woe : and if there still remain'd not  
 On Arno's passage some faint glimpse of him,  
 Those citizens, who rear'd once more her walls  
 Upon the ashes left by Attila,  
 Had labour'd without profit of their toil.  
 I slung the fatal noose <sup>2</sup> from my own roof."

## CANTO XIV

## ARGUMENT

They arrive at the beginning of the third of those compartments into which this seventh circle is divided. It is a plain of dry and hot sand, where three kinds of violence are punished ; namely, against God, against Nature, and against Art ; and those who have thus sinned, are tormented by flakes of fire, which are eternally showering down upon them. Among the violent against God is found Capaneus, whose blasphemies they hear. Next, turning to the left along the forest of self-slayers, and having journeyed a little onwards, they meet with a streamlet of blood that issues from the forest and traverses the sandy plain. Here Virgil speaks to our Poet of a huge ancient statue that stands within Mount Ida in Crete, from a fissure in which statue there is a dripping of tears, from which the said streamlet, together with the three other infernal rivers, are formed.

Soon as the charity of native land <sup>3</sup>  
 Wrought in my bosom, I the scatter'd leaves

<sup>1</sup> *In that city.*] "I was an inhabitant of Florence, that city which changed her first patron Mars for St. John the Baptist ; for which reason the vengeance of the deity thus slighted will never be appeased ; and if some remains of his statue were not still visible on the bridge over the Arno, she would have been already levelled to the ground ; and thus the citizens, who raised her again from the ashes to which Attila had reduced her, would have laboured in vain." See Paradiso, Canto xvi. 44. The relic of antiquity, to which the superstition of Florence attached so high an importance, was carried away by a flood, that destroyed the bridge on which it stood, in the year 1337, but without the ill effects that were apprehended from the loss of their fancied Palladium.

<sup>2</sup> *I slung the fatal noose.*] We are not informed who this suicide was ; some calling him Rocco de' Mozzi, and others Lotto degli Agli. <sup>3</sup> Editor's note : "Poichè la carità del natio loco." The word "*poichè*" would here be more properly translated as "*because*." "Because the love of my native land," &c.

Collected, and to him restored, who now  
 Was hoarse with utterance. To the limit thence  
 We came, which from the third the second round  
 Divides, and where of justice is display'd  
 Contrivance horrible. Things then first seen  
 Clearlier to manifest, I tell how next  
 A plain we reached, that from its steril bed  
 Each plant repell'd. The mournful wood waves round  
 Its garland on all sides, as round the wood  
 Spreads the sad foss. There, on the very edge,  
 Our steps we stay'd. It was an area wide  
 Of arid sand and thick, resembling most  
 The soil that erst by Cato's foot<sup>1</sup> was trod.

Vengeance of heaven! Oh! how shouldst thou be  
 fear'd

By all, who read what here mine eyes beheld.

Of naked spirits many a flock I saw,  
 All weeping piteously, to different laws  
 Subjected; for on the earth some lay supine,  
 Some crouching close were seated, others paced  
 Incessantly around; the latter tribe  
 More numerous, those fewer who beneath  
 The torment lay, but louder in their grief.

O'er all the sand fell slowly wafting down  
 Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow  
 On Alpine summit, when the wind is hush'd.  
 As, in the torrid Indian clime,<sup>2</sup> the son  
 Of Ammon saw, upon his warrior band  
 Descending, solid flames, that to the ground  
 Came down; whence he bethought him with his troop  
 To trample on the soil; for easier thus  
 The vapour was extinguish'd, while alone:  
 So fell the eternal fiery flood, wherewith  
 The marle glow'd underneath, as under stove  
 The viands, doubly to augment the pain.  
 Unceasing was the play of wretched hands,  
 Now this, now that way glancing, to shake off

<sup>1</sup> By Cato's foot.] See Lucan, Phars. lib. ix.    <sup>2</sup> As, in the torrid Indian clime.] Landino refers to Albertus Magnus for the circumstance here alluded to.

The heat, still falling fresh. I thus began :  
“ Instructor ! thou who all things overcomest,  
Except the hardy demons that rush'd forth  
To stop our entrance at the gate, say who  
Is yon huge spirit, that, as seems, heeds not  
The burning, but lies writhen in proud scorn,  
As by the sultry tempest immatured ? ”

Straight he himself, who was aware I ask'd  
My guide of him, exclaim'd : “ Such as I was  
When living, dead such now I am. If Jove  
Weary his workman out, from whom in ire  
He snatch'd the lightnings, that at my last day  
Transfix'd me ; if the rest he weary out,  
At their black smithy labouring by turns,  
In Mongibello, while he cries aloud,  
' Help, help, good Mulciber ! ' as erst he cried  
In the Phlegrean warfare ; and the bolts  
Launch he, full aim'd at me, with all his might ;  
He never should enjoy a sweet revenge.”

Then thus my guide, in accent higher raised  
Than I before had heard him : “ Capaneus !  
Thou art more punish'd, in that this thy pride  
Lives yet unquench'd : no torment, save thy rage  
Were to thy fury pain proportion'd full.”

Next turning round to me, with milder lip  
He spake : “ This of the seven kings was one,  
Who girt the Theban walls with siege, and held,  
As still he seems to hold, God in disdain,  
And sets His high omnipotence at nought.  
But, as I told him, his despiteful mood  
Is ornament well suits the breast that wears it.  
Follow me now ; and look thou set not yet  
Thy foot in the hot sand, but to the wood  
Keep ever close.” Silently on we pass'd  
To where there gushes from the forest's bound  
A little brook, whose crimson'd wave yet lifts  
My hair with horror. As the rill, that runs  
From Bulicame,<sup>1</sup> to be portion'd out

<sup>1</sup> *Bulicame*.] A warm medicinal spring near Viterbo ; the waters of which, as Landino and Vellutello affirm, passed by a place of ill fame.

Among the sinful women ; so ran this  
Down through the sand ; its bottom and each bank  
Stone-built, and either margin at its side,  
Whereon I straight perceived our passage lay.

“ Of all that I have shown thee, since that gate  
We enter’d first, whose threshold is to none  
Denied, nought else so worthy of regard,  
As is this river, has thine eye discern’d,  
O’er which the flaming volley all is quench’d.”

So spake my guide ; and I him thence besought,  
That having given me appetite to know,  
The food he too would give, that hunger craved.

“ In midst of ocean,” forthwith he began,  
“ A desolate country lies, which Crete is named ;  
Under whose monarch,<sup>1</sup> in old times, the world  
Lived pure and chaste. A mountain rises there,  
Call’d Ida, joyous once with leaves and streams,  
Deserted now like a forbidden thing.  
It was the spot which Rhea, Saturn’s spouse,  
Chose for the secret cradle of her son ;  
And better to conceal him, drown’d in shouts  
His infant cries. Within the mount, upright  
An ancient form there stands, and huge, that turns  
His shoulders towards Damiata ; and at Rome,  
As in his mirror, looks. Of finest gold  
His head <sup>2</sup> is shaped, pure silver are the breast  
And arms, thence to the middle is of brass,  
And downward all beneath well-temper’d steel,  
Save the right foot of potter’s clay, on which  
Than on the other more erect he stands.  
Each part, except the gold, is rent throughout ;  
And from the fissure tears distil, which join’d  
Penetrate to that cave. They in their course,  
Thus far precipitated down the rock,

<sup>1</sup> *Under whose monarch.]*

Credo pudicitiam Saturno rege moratam

In terris.———

Juv., Satir. vi.

In Saturn’s reign, at Nature’s early birth,

There was a thing call’d chastity on earth. Dryden.

<sup>2</sup> *His head.]* “ This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass : His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.” Daniel, ch. ii. 32. 33.

Form Acheron, and Styx, and Phlegethon ;  
Then by this straiten'd channel passing hence  
Beneath, e'en to the lowest depth of all,  
Form there Cocytus, of whose lake (thyself  
Shalt see it) I here give thee no account."

Then I to him : " If from our world this sluice  
Be thus derived ; wherefore to us but now  
Appears it at this edge ? " He straight replied :  
" The place, thou know'st, is round : and though  
great part

Thou have already past, still to the left  
Descending to the nethermost, not yet  
Hast thou the circuit made of the whole orb.  
Wherefore, if aught of new to us appear,  
It needs not bring up wonder in thy looks."

Then I again inquired : " Where flow the streams  
Of Phlegethon and Lethe ? for of one  
Thou tell'st not ; and the other, of that shower,  
Thou say'st, is form'd." He answer thus return'd :  
" Doubtless thy questions all well pleased I hear.  
Yet the red seething wave <sup>1</sup> might have resolved  
One thou proposest. Lethe thou shalt see,  
But not within this hollow, in the place  
Whither,<sup>2</sup> to lave themselves, the spirits go,  
Whose blame hath been by penitence removed."  
He added : " Time is now we quit the wood.  
Look thou my steps pursue : the margins give  
Safe passage, unimpeded by the flames ;  
For over them all vapour is extinct."

<sup>1</sup> *The red seething wave.*] This he might have known was Phlegethon.

<sup>2</sup> *Whither.*] On the other side of Purgatory.

## CANTO XV

## ARGUMENT

Taking their way upon one of the mounds by which the streamlet, spoken of in the last Canto, was embanked, and having gone so far that they could no longer have discerned the forest if they had turned round to look for it, they meet a troop of spirits that come along the sand by the side of the pier. These are they who have done violence to Nature; and amongst them Dante distinguishes Brunetto Latini, who had been formerly his master; with whom, turning a little backward, he holds a discourse which occupies the remainder of this Canto.

ONE of the solid margins bears us now  
 Envelop'd in the mist, that, from the stream  
 Arising, hovers o'er, and saves from fire  
 Both piers and water. As the Flemings rear  
 Their mound, 'twixt Ghent and Bruges, to chase back  
 The ocean, fearing his tumultuous tide  
 That drives toward them; or the Paduans theirs  
 Along the Brenta, to defend their towns  
 And castles, ere the genial warmth be felt  
 On Chiarentana's<sup>1</sup> top; such were the mounds,  
 So framed, though not in height or bulk to these  
 Made equal, by the master, whosoe'er  
 He was, that raised them here. We from the wood  
 Were now so far removed, that turning round  
 I might not have discern'd it, when we met  
 A troop of spirits, who came beside the pier.

They each one eyed us, as at eventide  
 One eyes another under a new moon;  
 And toward us sharpen'd their sight, as keen  
 As an old tailor at his needle's eye.

Thus narrowly explored by all the tribe,  
 I was agnized of one, who by the skirt  
 Caught me, and cried, "What wonder have we here?"

And I, when he to me outstretch'd his arm,  
 Intently fix'd my ken on his parch'd looks,

<sup>1</sup> *Chiarentana*.] A part of the Alps where the Brenta rises; which river is much swollen as soon as the snow begins to dissolve on the mountains.



That, although smirch'd with fire, they hinder'd not  
 But I remember'd him ; and towards his face  
 My hand inclining, answer'd : " Ser Brunetto !<sup>1</sup>  
 And are ye here ? " He thus to me : " My son !  
 Oh let it not displease thee, if Brunetto  
 Latini but a little space with thee  
 Turn back, and leave his fellows to proceed."

I thus to him replied : " Much as I can,  
 I thereto pray thee ; and if thou be willing  
 That I here seat me with thee, I consent ;  
 His leave, with whom I journey, first obtain'd."

" O son ! " said he, " whoever of this throng  
 One instant stops, lies then a hundred years.  
 No fan to ventilate him, when the fire  
 Smites sorest. Pass thou therefore on. I close

<sup>1</sup> *Brunetto.*] " Ser Brunetto, a Florentine, the secretary or chancellor of the city, and Dante's preceptor, hath left us a work so little read, that both the subject of it and the language of it have been mistaken. It is in the French spoken in the reign of St. Louis, under the title of *Tresor*; and contains a species of philosophical course of lectures divided into theory and practice, or, as he expresses it, *un enchaussement des choses divines et humaines*," &c. Sir R. Clayton's Translation of Tenhove's *Memoirs of the Medici*, vol. i. ch. ii. p. 104. The *Tresor* has never been printed in the original language. There is a fine manuscript of it in the British Museum, with an illuminated portrait of Brunetto in his study, prefixed. Mus. Brit. MSS. 17, E. 1. *Tesor*. It is divided into four books: the first, on Cosmogony and Theology; the second, a translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*; the third, on Virtues and Vices; the fourth, on Rhetoric. For an interesting memoir relating to this work, see *Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, tom. vii. 296. His *Tesoretto*, one of the earliest productions of Italian poetry, is a curious work, not unlike the writings of Chaucer in style and numbers; though Bembo remarks, that his pupil, however largely he had stolen from it, could not have much enriched himself. It has been observed, that Dante derived the idea of opening his poem by describing himself as lost in a wood, from the *Tesoretto* of his master. I know not whether it has been remarked, that the crime of usury is branded by both these poets as offensive to God and Nature:

Un altro, che non cura	One, that holdeth not in mind
Di Dio ne di Natura,	Law of God or Nature's kind,
Si diventa usuriere.	Taketh him to usury.

—or that the sin for which Brunetto is condemned by his pupil is mentioned in his *Tesoretto* with great horror. But see what is said on this subject by Perticari, *Degli Scrittori del Trecento*, l. i. c. iv. Brunetto died in 1294. G. Villani sums up his account of him by saying, that he was himself a worldly man; but that he was the first to refine the Florentines from their grossness, and to instruct them in speaking properly and in conducting the affairs of the republic on principles of policy.

Will at thy garments walk, and then rejoin  
My troop, who go mourning their endless doom."

I dared not from the path descend to tread  
On equal ground with him, but held my head  
Bent down, as one who walks in reverent guise.

"What chance or destiny," thus he began,  
"Ere the last day, conducts thee here below?  
And who is this that shows to thee the way?"

"There up aloft," I answer'd, "in the life  
Serene, I wander'd in a valley lost,  
Before mine age<sup>1</sup> had to its fulness reach'd.  
But yester-morn I left it: then once more  
Into that vale returning, him I met;  
And by this path homeward he leads me back."

"If thou," he answer'd, "follow but thy star,  
Thou canst not miss at last a glorious haven;  
Unless in fairer days my judgment err'd.  
And if my fate so early had not chanced,  
Seeing the heavens thus bounteous to thee, I  
Had gladly given thee comfort in thy work.  
But that ungrateful and malignant race,  
Who in old times came down from Fesole,<sup>2</sup>  
Ay, and still smack of their rough mountain-flint,  
Will for thy good deeds show thee enmity.  
Nor wonder; for amongst ill-savour'd crabs  
It suits not the sweet fig-tree lay her fruit.  
Old fame reports them in the world for blind,<sup>3</sup>  
Covetous, envious, proud. Look to it well:  
Take heed thou cleanse thee of their ways. For thee,  
Thy fortune hath such honour in reserve,  
That thou by either party shalt be craved

<sup>1</sup> *Before mine age.*] On the whole, Vellutello's explanation of this is, I think, most satisfactory. He supposes it to mean, "before the appointed end of his life was arrived—before his days were accomplished." Lombardi, concluding that the fulness of age must be the same as "the midway of this our mortal life" (see Canto i. v. 1), understands that he had lost himself in the wood before that time, and that he then only discovered his having gone astray. <sup>2</sup> *Who in old times came down from Fesole.*] See G. Villani, Hist. lib. iv. cap. v., and Macchiav., Hist. of Flor. b. ii. <sup>3</sup> *Blind.*] It is said that the Florentines were thus called, in consequence of their having been deceived by a shallow artifice practised on them by the Pisans, in the year 1117. See G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. xxx.

With hunger keen : but be the fresh herb far  
From the goat's tooth. The herd of Fesole  
May of themselves make litter, not touch the plant,  
If any such yet spring on their rank bed,  
In which the holy seed revives, transmitted  
From those true Romans, who still there remain'd,  
When it was made the nest of so much ill."

" Were all my wish fulfill'd," I straight replied,  
" Thou from the confines of man's nature yet  
Hadst not been driven forth ; for in my mind  
Is fix'd, and now strikes full upon my heart,  
The dear, benign, paternal image, such  
As thine was, when so lately thou didst teach me  
The way for man to win eternity :  
And how I prized the lesson, it behoves,  
That, long as life endures, my tongue should speak.  
What of my fate thou tell'st, that write I down ;  
And, with another text <sup>1</sup> to comment on,  
For her I keep it, the celestial dame,  
Who will know all, if I to her arrive.  
This only would I have thee clearly note :  
That, so my conscience have no plea against me,  
Do Fortune as she list, I stand prepared.  
Not new or strange such earnest to mine ear.  
Speed Fortune then her wheel, as likes her best ;  
The clown his mattock ; all things have their course."

Thereat my sapient guide upon his right  
Turn'd himself back, then looked at me, and spake :  
" He listens to good purpose who takes note."

I not the less still on my way proceed,  
Discoursing with Brunetto, and inquire  
Who are most known and chief among his tribe.

" To know of some is well " ; he thus replied,  
" But of the rest silence may best beseem.  
Time would not serve us for report so long.  
In brief I tell thee, that all these were clerks,  
Men of great learning and no less renown,  
By one same sin polluted in the world.

<sup>1</sup> *With another text.*] He refers to the prediction of Farinata, in Canto x.

With them is Priscian ;<sup>1</sup> and Accorso's son,  
 Francesco,<sup>2</sup> herds among that wretched throng :  
 And, if the wish of so impure a blotch  
 Possess'd thee, him<sup>3</sup> thou also mightst have seen,  
 Who by the servants' servant was transferr'd  
 From Arno's seat to Bacchiglione, where  
 His ill-strained nerves he left. I more would add,  
 But must from further speech and onward way  
 Alike desist ; for yonder I behold  
 A mist new-risen on the sandy plain.  
 A company, with whom I may not sort,  
 Approaches. I commend my *Treasure* to thee,<sup>4</sup>  
 Wherein I yet survive ; my sole request."

This said, he turn'd, and seem'd as one of those  
 Who o'er Verona's champain try their speed  
 For the green mantle ; and of them he seem'd,  
 Not he who loses but who gains the prize.

<sup>1</sup> *Priscian.*] There is no reason to believe, as the commentators observe, that the grammarian of this name was stained with the vice imputed to him ; and we must therefore suppose that Dante puts the individual for the species, and implies the frequency of the crime among those who abused the opportunities which the education of youth afforded them, to so abominable a purpose. <sup>2</sup> *Francesco.*] Accorso, a Florentine, interpreted the Roman law at Bologna, and died in 1229, at the age of 78. His authority was so great as to exceed that of all the other interpreters, so that Cino da Pistoia termed him the Idol of Advocates. His sepulchre, and that of his son Francesco here spoken of, is at Bologna, with this short epitaph : "Sepulcrum Accursii Glossatoris et Francisci ejus Filii." See Guidi Panziroli, *De Claris Legum Interpretibus*, lib. ii. cap. xxix. Lips. 4to, 1721. <sup>3</sup> *Him.*] Andrea de' Mozzi, who, that his scandalous life might be less exposed to observation, was translated either by Nicolas III. or Boniface VIII. from the See of Florence to that of Vicenza, through which passes the river Bacchiglione. At the latter of these places he died. <sup>4</sup> *I commend my Treasure to thee.*] Brunetto's great work, the *Tresor*.

## CANTO XVI

## ARGUMENT

Journeying along the pier, which crosses the sand, they are now so near the end of it as to hear the noise of the stream falling into the eighth circle, when they meet the spirits of three military men; who judging Dante, from his dress, to be a countryman of theirs, entreat him to stop. He complies, and speaks with them. The two Poets then reach the place where the water descends, being the termination of this third compartment in the seventh circle; and here Virgil having thrown down into the hollow a cord, wherewith Dante was girt, they behold at that signal a monstrous and horrible figure come swimming up to them.

Now came I where the water's din was heard,  
As down it fell into the other round,  
Resounding like the hum of swarming bees :  
When forth together issued from a troop,  
That pass'd beneath the fierce tormenting storm,  
Three spirits, running swift. They towards us came,  
And each one cried aloud, " Oh ! do thou stay,  
Whom, by the fashion of thy garb, we deem  
To be some inmate of our evil land."

Ah me ! what wounds I mark'd upon their limbs,  
Recent and old, inflicted by the flames.  
E'en the remembrance of them grieves me yet.

Attentive to their cry, my teacher paused,  
And turn'd to me his visage, and then spake :  
" Wait now : our courtesy these merit well :  
And were 't not for the nature of the place,  
Whence glide the fiery darts, I should have said,  
That haste had better suited thee than them."

They, when we stopp'd, resumed their ancient wail,  
And, soon as they had reach'd us, all the three  
Whirl'd round together in one restless wheel.  
As naked champions, smear'd with slippery oil  
Are wont, intent, to watch their place of hold  
And vantage, ere in closer strife they meet ;  
Thus each one, as he wheel'd, his countenance  
At me directed, so that opposite  
The neck moved ever to the twinkling feet.

" If woe of this unsound and dreary waste,"

Thus one began, " added to our sad cheer  
 Thus peel'd with flame, do call forth scorn on us  
 And our entreaties, let our great renown  
 Incline thee to inform us who thou art,  
 That dost imprint, with living feet unharm'd,  
 The soil of Hell. He, in whose track thou seest  
 My steps pursuing, naked though he be  
 And reft of all, was of more high estate  
 Than thou believest ; grandchild of the chaste  
 Gualdrada,<sup>1</sup> him they Guidoguerra call'd,  
 Who in his lifetime many a noble act  
 Achieved, both by his wisdom and his sword.  
 The other, next to me that beats the sand,  
 Is Aldobrandi,<sup>2</sup> name deserving well,

<sup>1</sup> *Gualdrada*.] Gualdrada was the daughter of Bellincione Berti, of whom mention is made in the Paradiso, Cantos xv. and xvi. He was of the family of Ravignani, a branch of the Adimari. The Emperor Otho iv. being at a festival in Florence, where Gualdrada was present, was struck with her beauty ; and inquiring who she was, was answered by Bellincione, that she was the daughter of one who, if it was his Majesty's pleasure, would make her admit the honour of his salute. On overhearing this, she arose from her seat, and blushing, in an animated tone of voice, desired her father that he would not be so liberal in his offers, for that no man should ever be allowed that freedom except him who should be her lawful husband. The emperor was not less delighted by her resolute modesty than he had before been by the loveliness of her person ; and calling to him Guido, one of his barons, gave her to him in marriage ; at the same time raising him to the rank of a count, and bestowing on her the whole of Casentino, and a part of the territory of Romagna, as her portion. Two sons were the offspring of this union, Guglielmo and Ruggieri ; the latter of whom was father of Guidoguerra, a man of great military skill and prowess ; who, at the head of four hundred Florentines of the Guelph party, was signally instrumental to the victory obtained at Benevento by Charles of Anjou, over Manfredi King of Naples, in 1265. One of the consequences of this victory was the expulsion of the Ghibellini, and the re-establishment of the Guelphi at Florence. Borghini (*Disc. dell' Orig. di Firenze*, ediz. 1755, page 6), as cited by Lombardi, endeavours by a comparison of dates to throw discredit on the above relation of Gualdrada's answer to her father, which is found in G. Villani, lib. v. c. xxxvii. ; and Lombardi adds, that if it had been true, Bellincione would have been worthy of a place in the eighteenth Canto of the Inferno, rather than of being mentioned with praise in the Paradiso : to which it may be answered, that the proposal of the father, however irreconcilable it may be to our notions of modern refinement, might possibly in those times have been considered rather as a sportive sally than as a serious exposure of his daughter's innocence. <sup>2</sup> *Aldobrandi*.] Tegghiaio Aldobrandi was of the noble family of Adimari, and much esteemed for his military talents. He endeavoured



In the upper world, of honour ; and myself,  
 Who in this torment do partake with them,  
 Am Rusticucci,<sup>1</sup> whom, past doubt, my wife,  
 Of savage temper, more than aught beside  
 Hath to this evil brought." If from the fire  
 I had been shelter'd, down amidst them straight  
 I then had cast me ; nor my guide, I deem,  
 Would have restrain'd my going : but that fear  
 Of the dire burning vanquish'd the desire,  
 Which made me eager of their wish'd embrace.

I then began : " Not scorn, but grief much more,  
 Such as long time alone can cure, your doom  
 Fix'd deep within me, soon as this my lord  
 Spake words, whose tenor taught me to expect  
 That such a race, as ye are, was at hand.  
 I am a countryman of yours, who still  
 Affectionate have utter'd, and have heard  
 Your deeds and names renown'd. Leaving the gall,  
 For the sweet fruit I go, that a sure guide  
 Hath promised to me. But behoves, that far  
 As to the centre first I downward tend."

" So may long space thy spirit guide thy limbs,"  
 He answer straight return'd ; " and so thy fame  
 Shine bright when thou art gone, as thou shalt tell,  
 If courtesy and valour, as they wont,  
 Dwell in our city, or have vanish'd clean :  
 For one amidst us late condemn'd to wail,  
 Borsiere,<sup>2</sup> yonder walking with his peers,  
 Grieves us no little by the news he brings."

" An upstart multitude and sudden gains,  
 Pride and excess, O Florence ! have in thee  
 Engender'd, so that now in tears thou mourn'st ! "

Thus cried I, with my face upraised, and they

to dissuade the Florentines from the attack which they meditated against the Sienese ; and the rejection of his counsel occasioned the memorable defeat which the former sustained at Montaperti, and the consequent banishment of the Guelfi from Florence.

<sup>1</sup> *Rusticucci.*] Giacomo Rusticucci, a Florentine, remarkable for his opulence and the generosity of his spirit. <sup>2</sup> *Borsiere.*] Guglielmo Borsiere, another Florentine, whom Boccaccio, in a story which he relates of him, terms " a man of courteous and elegant manners, and of great readiness in conversation." Dec. Giorn. i. Nov. 8.

All three, who for an answer took my words,  
 Look'd at each other, as men look when truth  
 Comes to their ear. "If at so little cost,"<sup>1</sup>  
 They all at once rejoin'd, "thou satisfy  
 Others who question thee, O happy thou!  
 Gifted with words so apt to speak thy thought.  
 Wherefore, if thou escape this darksome clime,  
 Returning to behold the radiant stars,  
 When thou with pleasure shalt retrace the past,  
 See that of us thou speak among mankind."

This said, they broke the circle, and so swift  
 Fled, that as pinions seem'd their nimble feet.

Not in so short a time might one have said  
 "Amen," as they had vanish'd. Straight my  
 guide

Pursued his track. I follow'd: and small space  
 Had we past onward, when the water's sound  
 Was now so near at hand, that we had scarce  
 Heard one another's speech for the loud din.

E'en as the river,<sup>2</sup> that first holds its course  
 Unmingled, from the Mount of Vesulo,  
 On the left side of Apennine, toward  
 The east, which Acquacheta higher up  
 They call, ere it descend into the vale,  
 At Forlì,<sup>3</sup> by that name no longer known,  
 Rebellow's o'er Saint Benedict, roll'd on  
 From the Alpine summit down a precipice,  
 Where space<sup>4</sup> enough to lodge a thousand spreads;  
 Thus downward from a craggy steep we found

<sup>1</sup> *At so little cost.*] They intimate to our Poet (as Lombardi well observes) the inconveniences to which his freedom of speech was about to expose him in the future course of his life. <sup>2</sup> *E'en as the river.*] He compares the fall of Phlegethon to that of the Montone (a river in Romagna) from the Apennine above the Abbey of St. Benedict. All the other streams, that rise between the sources of the Po and the Montone, and fall from the left side of the Apennine, join the Po, and accompany it to the sea. <sup>3</sup> *At Forlì.*] Because there it loses the name of Acquacheta, and takes that of Montone. <sup>4</sup> *Where space.*] Either because the abbey was capable of containing more than those who occupied it, or because (says Landino) the lords of that territory, as Boccaccio related on the authority of the abbot, had intended to build a castle near the water-fall, and to collect within its walls the population of the neighbouring villages.

That this dark wave resounded, roaring loud,  
So that the ear its clamour soon had stunn'd.

I had a cord<sup>1</sup> that braced my girdle round,  
Wherewith I erst had thought fast bound to take  
The painted leopard. This when I had all  
Unloosen'd from me (so my master bade)  
I gather'd up, and stretch'd it forth to him.  
Then to the right he turn'd, and from the brink  
Standing few paces distant, cast it down  
Into the deep abyss. "And somewhat strange,"  
Thus to myself I spake, "signal so strange  
Betokens, which my guide with earnest eye  
Thus follows." Ah! what caution must men use  
With those who look not at the deed alone,  
But spy into the thoughts with subtle skill.

"Quickly shall come," he said, "what I expect;  
Thine eye discover quickly that, whereof  
Thy thought is dreaming." Ever to that truth,  
Which but the semblance of a falsehood wears,  
A man, if possible, should bar his lip;  
Since, although blameless, he incurs reproach.  
But silence here were vain; and by these notes,  
Which now I sing, reader, I swear to thee,  
So may they favour find to latest times!  
That through the gross and murky air I spied  
A shape come swimming up, that might have  
quell'd  
The stoutest heart with wonder; in such guise  
As one returns, who hath been down to loose

<sup>1</sup> *A cord.*] This passage, as it is confessed by Landino, involves a fiction sufficiently obscure. His own attempt to unravel it does not much lessen the difficulty. That which Lombardi has made is something better. It is believed that our Poet, in the earlier part of his life, had entered into the order of St. Francis. By observing the rules of that profession, he had designed to mortify his carnal appetites, or, as he expresses it, "to take the painted leopard" (that animal, which, as we have seen in a note to the first Canto, represented Pleasure) "with this cord." This part of the habit he is now desired by Virgil to take off; and it is thrown down the gulf, to allure Geryon to them with the expectation of carrying down one who had cloaked his iniquities under the garb of penitence and self-mortification; and thus (to apply to Dante on this occasion the words of Milton)

"He, as Franciscan, thought to pass disguised."

An anchor grappled fast against some rock,  
Or to aught else that in the salt wave lies,  
Who upward springing, close draws in his feet.

## CANTO XVII

### ARGUMENT

The monster Geryon is described; to whom while Virgil is speaking in order that he may carry them both down to the next circle, Dante, by permission, goes a little farther along the edge of the void, to descry the third species of sinners contained in this compartment, namely, those who have done violence to Art; and then returning to his master, they both descend, seated on the back of Geryon.

“Lo! the fell monster<sup>1</sup> with the deadly sting,  
Who passes mountains, breaks through fenced walls  
And firm embattled spears, and with his filth  
Taints all the world.” Thus me my guide address’d,  
And beckon’d him, that he should come to shore,  
Near to the stony causeway’s utmost edge.

Forthwith that image vile of Fraud appear’d,  
His head and upper part exposed on land,  
But laid not on the shore his bestial train.  
His face the semblance of a just man’s wore,  
So kind and gracious was its outward cheer,  
The rest was serpent all: two shaggy claws  
Reach’d to the arm-pits; and the back and breast,  
And either side, were painted o’er with nodes  
And orbits. Colours variegated more  
Nor Turks nor Tartars e’er on cloth of state  
With interchangeable embroidery wove,  
Nor spread Arachne o’er her curious loom.  
As oft-times a light skiff, moor’d to the shore,  
Stands part in water, part upon the land;  
Or, as where dwells the greedy German boor,  
The beaver settles, watching for his prey;  
So on the rim, that fenced the sand with rock,  
Sat perch’d the fiend of evil. In the void

<sup>1</sup> *The fell monster.*] Fraud.

Glancing, his tail upturn'd its venomous fork,  
 With sting like scorpion's arm'd. Then thus my  
 guide:

"Now need our way must turn few steps apart,  
 Far as to that ill beast, who couches there."

Thereat, toward the right our downward course  
 We shaped, and, better to escape the flame  
 And burning marle, ten paces on the verge  
 Proceeded. Soon as we to him arrive,  
 A little further on mine eye beholds  
 A tribe of spirits, seated on the sand  
 Near to the void. Forthwith my master spake:  
 "That to the full thy knowledge may extend  
 Of all this round contains, go now, and mark  
 The mien these wear: but hold not long discourse.  
 Till thou returnest, I with him meantime  
 Will parley, that to us he may vouchsafe  
 The aid of his strong shoulders." Thus alone,  
 Yet forward on the extremity I paced  
 Of that seventh circle, where the mournful tribe  
 Were seated. At the eyes forth gush'd their pangs.  
 Against the vapours and the torrid soil  
 Alternately their shifting hands they plied.  
 Thus use the dogs in summer still to ply  
 Their jaws and feet by turns, when bitten sore  
 By gnats, or flies, or gadflies swarming round.

Noting the visages of some, who lay  
 Beneath the pelting of that dolorous fire,  
 One of them all I knew not; but perceived,  
 That pendent from his neck each bore a pouch<sup>1</sup>  
 With colours and with emblems various mark'd,  
 On which it seem'd as if their eye did feed.

And when, amongst them, looking round I came,  
 A yellow purse<sup>2</sup> I saw with azure wrought,  
 That wore a lion's countenance and port.

<sup>1</sup> *A pouch.*] A purse, whereon the armorial bearings of each were emblazoned. According to Landino, our Poet implies that the usurer can pretend to no other honour than such as he derives from his purse and his family. The description of persons by their heraldic insignia is remarkable both on the present and several other occasions in this poem. <sup>2</sup> *A yellow purse.*] The arms of the Gianfigliuzzi of Florence.

Then, still my sight pursuing its career,  
 Another <sup>1</sup> I beheld, than blood more red,  
 A goose display of whiter wing than curd.  
 And one, who bore a fat and azure swine <sup>2</sup>  
 Pictured on his white scrip, address'd me thus :  
 " What dost thou in this deep ? Go now and  
 know,

Since yet thou livest, that my neighbour here  
 Vitaliano <sup>3</sup> on my left shall sit.

A Paduan with these Florentines am I.

Of-times they thunder in mine ears, exclaiming,  
 ' Oh ! haste that noble knight, <sup>4</sup> he who the pouch  
 ' With the three goats <sup>5</sup> will bring.' " This said, he  
 writhed

The mouth, and loll'd the tongue out, like an ox  
 That licks his nostrils. I, lest longer stay  
 He ill might brook, who bade me stay not long,  
 Backward my steps from those sad spirits turn'd.

My guide already seated on the haunch  
 Of the fierce animal I found ; and thus  
 He me encouraged. " Be thou stout : be bold.  
 Down such a steep flight must we now descend.  
 Mount thou before : for, that no power the tail  
 May have to harm thee, I will be i' th' midst."

As one, <sup>6</sup> who hath an ague fit so near,  
 His nails already are turn'd blue, and he  
 Quivers all over, if he but eye the shade ;  
 Such was my cheer at hearing of his words.

<sup>1</sup> *Another.*] Those of the Ubbriachi, another Florentine family of high distinction. <sup>2</sup> *A fat and azure swine.*] The arms of the Scrovigni, a noble family of Padua. <sup>3</sup> *Vitaliano.*] Vitaliano del Dente, a Paduan. <sup>4</sup> *That noble knight.*] Giovanni Bujamonti, a Florentine usurer, the most infamous of his time. <sup>5</sup> *Goats.*] Monti, in his *Proposta*, had introduced a facetious dialogue, on the supposed mistake made in the interpretation of this word "Becchi" by the compilers of the *Della Crusca Dictionary*, who translated it "goats," instead of "beaks." He afterwards saw his own error, and had the ingenuousness to confess it in the *Appendix*, p. 274. Having in the former editions of this work been betrayed into the same misunderstanding of my author, I cannot do less than follow so good an example, by acknowledging and correcting it. <sup>6</sup> *As one.*] Dante trembled with fear, like a man who, expecting the return of a quartan ague, shakes even at the sight of a place made cool by the shade.



But shame <sup>1</sup> soon interposed her threat, who makes  
The servant bold in presence of his lord.

I settled me upon those shoulders huge,  
And would have said, but that the words to aid  
My purpose came not, "Look thou clasp me firm."

But he whose succour then not first I prov'd,  
Soon as I mounted, in his arms aloft,  
Embracing, held me up; and thus he spake:  
"Geryon! now move thee: be thy wheeling yres  
Of ample circuit, easy thy descent.

Think on the unusual burden thou sustain'st."

As a small vessel, backening out from land,  
Her station quits; so thence the monster loosed,  
And, when he felt himself at large, turn'd round  
There, where the breast had been, his forked tail.  
Thus, like an eel, outstretch'd at length he steer'd,  
Gathering the air up with retractile claws.

Not greater was the dread, when Phaëton  
The reins let drop at random, whence high heaven,  
Whereof signs yet appear, was wrapt in flames;  
Nor when ill-fated Icarus perceived,  
By liquefaction of the scalded wax,  
The trusted pennons loosen'd from his loins,  
His sire exclaiming loud, "Ill way thou keep'st,"  
Than was my dread, when round me on each part  
The air I view'd, and other object none  
Save the fell beast. He, slowly sailing, wheels  
His downward motion, unobserved of me,  
But that the wind, arising to my face,  
Breathes on me from below. Now on our right  
I heard the cataract beneath us leap  
With hideous crash; whence bending down to explore,  
New terror I conceived at the steep plunge;  
For flames I saw, and wailings smote mine ear:  
So that, all trembling, close I crouch'd my limbs,

<sup>1</sup> *But shame.*] I have followed the reading in Vellutello's edition,

*Ma vergogna mi fe le sue minacce;*

which appears preferable to the common one,

*Ma vergogna mi fer, &c.*

It is necessary that I should observe this, because it has been imputed to me as a mistake.

And then distinguished, unperceiv'd before,  
By the dread torments that on every side  
Drew nearer, how our downward course we wound.

As falcon, that hath long been on the wing,  
But lure nor bird hath seen, while in despair  
The falconer cries, "Ah me! thou stoop'st to earth,"  
Wearied descends, whence nimbly he arose  
In many an airy wheel, and lighting sits  
At distance from his lord in angry mood;  
So Geryon lighting places us on foot  
Low down at base of the deep-furrow'd rock,  
And, of his burden there discharged, forthwith  
Sprang forward, like an arrow from the string.

## CANTO XVIII

### ARGUMENT

The Poet describes the situation and form of the eighth circle, divided into ten gulfs, which contain as many different descriptions of fraudulent sinners; but in the present Canto he treats only of two sorts: the first is of those who, either for their own pleasure, or for that of another, have seduced any woman from her duty; and these are scourged of demons in the first gulf: the other sort is of flatterers, who in the second gulf are condemned to remain immersed in filth.

THERE is a place within the depths of hell  
Call'd Malebolge, all of rock dark-stain'd  
With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep  
That round it circling winds. Right in the midst  
Of that abominable region yawns  
A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame  
Due time shall tell. The circle, that remains,  
Throughout its round, between the gulf and base  
Of the high craggy banks, successive forms  
Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised.

As where, to guard the walls, full many a foss  
Begirds some stately castle, sure defence <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sure defence.*] La parte dov' e' son rendon sicura.  
This is the common reading; besides which there are two others:  
La parte dove il sol rende figura;  
and, La parte dov' ei son rende figura:

Affording to the space within ; so here  
 Were model'd these : and as like fortresses,  
 E'en from their threshold to the brink without,  
 Are flank'd with bridges ; from the rock's low base  
 Thus flinty paths advanced, that 'cross the moles  
 And dikes struck onward far as to the gulf,  
 That in one bound collected cuts them off.  
 Such was the place, wherein we found ourselves  
 From Geryon's back dislodged. The bard to left  
 Held on his way, and I behind him moved.

On our right hand new misery I saw,  
 New pains, new executioners of wrath,  
 That swarming peopled the first chasm. Below  
 Were naked sinners. Hitherward they came,  
 Meeting our faces, from the middle point ;  
 With us beyond,<sup>1</sup> but with a larger stride.  
 E'en thus the Romans,<sup>2</sup> when the year returns  
 Of Jubilee, with better speed to rid  
 The thronging multitudes, their means devise  
 For such as pass the bridge ; that on one side  
 All front toward the castle, and approach  
 Saint Peter's fane, on the other towards the mount.

Each diverse way, along the grisly rock,

the former of which two, Lombardi says, is found in Daniello's edition, printed at Venice, 1568 ; in that printed in the same city with the commentaries of Landino and Vellutello, 1572 ; and also in some MSS. The latter, which has very much the appearance of being genuine, was adopted by Lombardi himself, on the authority of a text supposed to be in the handwriting of Filippo Villani, but so defaced by the alterations made in it by some less skilful hand, that the traces of the old ink were with difficulty recovered ; and it has, since the publication of Lombardi's edition, been met with also in the Monte Cassino MS. Monti is decided in favour of Lombardi's reading, and Biagioli opposed to it.

<sup>1</sup> *With us beyond.*] Beyond the middle point they tended the same way with us, but their pace was quicker than ours. <sup>2</sup> *E'en thus the Romans.*] In the year 1300, Pope Boniface VIII., to remedy the inconvenience occasioned by the press of people who were passing over the bridge of St. Angelo during the time of the Jubilee, caused it to be divided lengthwise by a partition ; and ordered, that all those who were going to St. Peter's should keep one side, and those returning the other. G. Villani, who was present, describes the order that was preserved, lib. viii. c. xxxvi. It was at this time, and on this occasion, as the honest historian tells us, that he first conceived the design of "compiling his book."

Horn'd demons I beheld, with lashes huge,  
That on their back unmercifully smote.  
Ah ! how they made them bound at the first stripe !  
None for the second waited, nor the third.

Meantime, as on I pass'd, one met my sight,  
Whom soon as view'd, " Of him," cried I, " not yet  
Mine eye hath had his fill." I therefore stay'd <sup>1</sup>  
My feet to scan him, and the teacher kind  
Paused with me, and consented I should walk  
Backward a space ; and the tormented spirit,  
Who thought to hide him, bent his visage down.  
But it avail'd him nought ; for I exclaim'd :  
" Thou who dost cast thine eye upon the ground,  
Unless thy features do belie thee much,  
Venedico <sup>2</sup> art thou. But what brings thee  
Into this bitter seasoning ? " <sup>3</sup> He replied :  
" Unwillingly I answer to thy words.  
But thy clear speech, that to my mind recalls  
The world I once inhabited, constrains me.  
Know then 't was I who led fair Ghisola  
To do the Marquis' will, however fame  
The shameful tale have bruited. Nor alone  
Bologna hither sendeth me to mourn.  
Rather with us the place is so o'erthrong'd,  
That not so many tongues this day are taught,  
Betwixt the Reno and Savena's stream,  
To answer *Sipa* <sup>4</sup> in their country's phrase.  
And if of that securer proof thou need,  
Remember but our craving thirst for gold."

<sup>1</sup> *I therefore stay'd.*] " I piedi affissi " is the reading of the Nidobeatina edition ; but Lombardi is under an error, when he tells us that the other editions have " gli occhi affissi " ; for Vellutello's at least, printed in 1544, agrees with the Nidobeatina.

<sup>2</sup> *Venedico.*] Venedico Caccianimico, a Bolognese, who prevailed on his sister Ghisola to prostitute herself to Obizzo da Este, Marquis of Ferrara, whom we have seen among the tyrants, Canto xii.

<sup>3</sup> *Seasoning.*] Salse. Monti, in his *Proposta*, following Benvenuto da Imola, takes this to be the name of a place. If so, a play must have been intended on the word, which cannot be preserved in English.

<sup>4</sup> *To answer Sipia.*] He denotes Bologna by its situation between the rivers Savena to the east, and Reno to the west of that city ; and by a peculiarity of dialect, the use of the affirmative *sipa* instead either of *si*, or, as Monti will have it, of *sia*.

Him speaking thus, a demon with his thong  
Struck and exclaim'd, " Away, corrupter ! here  
Women are none for sale." Forthwith I join'd  
My escort, and few paces thence we came  
To where a rock forth issued from the bank.  
That easily ascended, to the right  
Upon its splinter turning, we depart  
From those eternal barriers. When arrived  
Where, underneath, the gaping arch lets pass  
The scourged souls : " Pause here," the teacher said,  
" And let these others miserable now  
Strike on thy ken ; faces not yet beheld,  
For that together they with us have walk'd."

From the old bridge we eyed the pack, who came  
From the other side toward us, like the rest,  
Excoriate from the lash. My gentle guide,  
By me unquestion'd, thus his speech resumed :  
" Behold that lofty shade, who this way tends,  
And seems too woe-begone to drop a tear.  
How yet the regal aspect he retains !  
Jason is he, whose skill and prowess won  
The ram from Colchos. To the Lemnian isle  
His passage thither led him, when those bold  
And pitiless women had slain all their males.  
There he with tokens and fair witching words  
Hypsipyle <sup>1</sup> beguiled, a virgin young,  
Who first had all the rest herself beguiled.  
Impregnated, he left her there forlorn.  
Such is the guilt condemns him to this pain.  
Here too Medea's injuries are avenged.  
All bear him company, who like deceit  
To his have practised. And thus much to know  
Of the first vale suffice thee, and of those  
Whom its keen torments urge." Now had we come  
Where, crossing the next pier, the straiten'd path  
Bestrides its shoulders to another arch.

Hence, in the second chasm we heard the ghosts,

<sup>1</sup> *Hypsipyle*.] See Apollonius Rhodius, l. i. and Valerius Flaccus, l. ii. Hypsipyle deceived the other women, by concealing her father Thoas, when they had agreed to put all their males to death.

Who gibber in low melancholy sounds,  
 With wide stretch'd nostrils snort, and on themselves  
 Smite with their palms. Upon the banks a scurf,  
 From the foul steam condensed, encrusting hung,  
 That held sharp combat with the sight and smell.

So hollow is the depth, that from no part,  
 Save on the summit of the rocky span,  
 Could I distinguish aught. Thus far we came ;  
 And thence I saw, within the foss below,  
 A crowd immersed in ordure, that appear'd  
 Draff of the human body. There beneath  
 Searching with eye inquisitive, I mark'd  
 One with his head so grimed, 't were hard to deem  
 If he were clerk or layman. Loud he cried :  
 " Why greedily thus bendest more on me,  
 Than on these other filthy ones, thy ken ? "

" Because, if true my memory," I replied,  
 " I heretofore have seen thee with dry locks ;  
 And thou Alessio <sup>1</sup> art, of Lucca sprung.  
 Therefore than all the rest I scan thee more."

Then beating on his brain, these words he spake :  
 " Me thus low down my flatteries have sunk,  
 Wherewith I ne'er enough could glut my tongue."

My leader thus : " A little further stretch  
 Thy face, that thou the visage well mayest note  
 Of that besotted, sluttish courtezan,  
 Who there doth rend her with defiled nails,  
 Now crouching down, now risen on her feet.  
 Thaïs <sup>2</sup> is this, the harlot, whose false lip  
 Answer'd her doting paramour that ask'd,  
 ' Thankest me much ! '—' Say rather, wondrously,'  
 And, seeing this, here satiate be our view."

<sup>1</sup> *Alessio*.] Alessio, of an ancient and considerable family in Lucca, called the Interminei. <sup>2</sup> *Thaïs*.] He alludes to that passage in the *Eunuchus* of Terence, where Thraso asks if Thaïs was obliged to him for the present he had sent her ; and Gnatho replies, that she had expressed her obligation in the most forcible terms.

*T. Magnas vero agere gratias Thaïs mihi ?*

*G. Ingentes.*

*Eun. a. iii. s. i.*



## CANTO XIX

## ARGUMENT

They come to the third gulf, wherein are punished those who have been guilty of simony. These are fixed with the head downwards in certain apertures, so that no more of them than the legs appears without, and on the soles of their feet are seen burning flames. Dante is taken down by his guide into the bottom of the gulf; and there finds Pope Nicholas the Fifth, whose evil deeds, together with those of other pontiffs, are bitterly reprehended. Virgil then carries him up again to the arch, which affords them a passage over the following gulf.

Woe to thee, Simon Magus ! woe to you,  
His wretched followers ! who the things of God,  
Which should be wedded unto goodness, them,  
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute  
For gold and silver in adultery.  
Now must the trumpet sound for you, since yours  
Is the third chasm. Upon the following vault  
We now had mounted, where the rock impends  
Directly o'er the centre of the foss.

Wisdom Supreme ! how wonderful the art,  
Which thou dost manifest in heaven, in earth,  
And in the evil world, how just a meed  
Allotting by thy virtue unto all.

I saw the livid stone, throughout the sides  
And in its bottom full of apertures,  
All equal in their width, and circular each.  
Nor ample less nor larger they appear'd  
Than, in Saint John's fair dome <sup>1</sup> of me beloved,  
Those framed to hold the pure baptismal streams,  
One of the which I brake, some few years past,  
To save a whelming infant : and be this  
A seal to undeceive whoever doubts  
The motive of my deed. From out the mouth  
Of every one emerged a sinner's feet,

<sup>1</sup> *Saint John's fair dome.*] The apertures in the rock were of the same dimensions as the fountains of St. John the Baptist at Florence ; one of which Dante says, he had broken, to rescue a child that was playing near and fell in. He intimates, that the motive of his breaking the font had been maliciously represented by his enemies.

And of the legs high upward as the calf.  
 The rest beneath was hid. On either foot  
 The soles were burning ; whence the flexile joints  
 Glanced with such violent motion, as had snapt  
 Asunder cords or twisted withs. As flame,  
 Feeding on unctuous matter, glides along  
 The surface, scarcely touching where it moves ;  
 So here, from heel to point, glided the flames.

“ Master ! say who is he, than all the rest  
 Glancing in fiercer agony, on whom  
 A ruddier flame doth prey ? ” I thus inquired.

“ If thou be willing,” he replied, “ that I  
 Carry thee down, where least the slope bank falls,  
 He of himself shall tell thee, and his wrongs.”

I then : “ As pleases thee, to me is best.  
 Thou art my lord ; and know’st that ne’er I quit  
 Thy will : what silence hides, that knowest thou.”

Thereat on the fourth pier we came, we turn’d,  
 And on our left descended to the depth,  
 A narrow strait, and perforated close.  
 Nor from his side my leader set me down,  
 Till to his orifice he brought, whose limb  
 Quivering express’d his pang. “ Whoe’er thou art,  
 Sad spirit ! thus reversed, and as a stake  
 Driven in the soil,” I in these words began ;  
 “ If thou be able, utter forth thy voice.”

There stood I like the friar, that doth shrive  
 A wretch for murder doom’d, who, e’en when fix’d,<sup>1</sup>  
 Calleth him back, whence death awhile delays.

He shouted : “ Ha ! already standest there ?  
 Already standest there, O Boniface ! ”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *When fix’d.*] The commentators on Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, p. 72, ediz. Giunti, 1573, cite the words of the statute by which murderers were sentenced thus to suffer at Florence. “ *Assassinus trahatur ad caudam muli seu asini usque ad locum justitiæ ; et ibidem plantetur capite deorsum, ita quod moriatur.* ” “ Let the assassin be dragged at the tail of a mule or ass to the place of justice ; and there let him be set in the ground with his face downward, so that he die.” <sup>2</sup> *O Boniface !*] The spirit mistakes Dante for Boniface VIII., who was then alive ; and who he did not expect would have arrived so soon, in consequence, as it should seem, of a prophecy, which predicted the death of that pope at a later period. Boniface died in 1303.

By many a year the writing play'd me false.  
 So early dost thou surfeit with the wealth,  
 For which thou fearedst not in guile <sup>1</sup> to take  
 The lovely lady, and then mangle her ? ”

I felt as those who, piercing not the drift  
 Of answer made them, stand as if exposed  
 In mockery, nor know what to reply ;  
 When Virgil thus admonished : “ Tell him quick,  
 ‘ I am not he, not he whom thou believest.’ ”

And I, as was enjoin'd me, straight replied.

That heard, the spirit all did wrench his feet,  
 And, sighing, next in woeful accent spake :  
 “ What then of me requirest ? If to know  
 So much imports thee, who I am, that thou  
 Hast therefore down the bank descended, learn  
 That in the mighty mantle I was robed,<sup>2</sup>  
 And of a she-bear was indeed the son,  
 So eager to advance my whelps, that there  
 My having in my purse above I stow'd,  
 And here myself. Under my head are dragg'd  
 The rest, my predecessors in the guilt  
 Of simony. Stretch'd at their length, they lie  
 Along an opening in the rock. 'Midst them  
 I also low shall fall, soon as he comes,  
 For whom I took thee, when so hastily  
 I question'd. But already longer time  
 Hath past, since my soles kindled, and I thus  
 Upturn'd have stood, than is his doom to stand  
 Planted with fiery feet. For after him,  
 One yet of deeds more ugly shall arrive,  
 From forth the west, a shepherd without law,<sup>3</sup>  
 Fated to cover both his form and mine.  
 He a new Jason <sup>4</sup> shall be call'd, of whom

<sup>1</sup> *In guile.*] “ Thou didst presume to arrive by fraudulent means  
 at the papal power, and afterwards to abuse it.” <sup>2</sup> *In the mighty*

*mantle I was robed.*] Nicholas III. of the Orsini family, whom the Poet  
 therefore calls “ figliuol dell' orsa ” “ son of the she-bear.” He died in  
 1281. <sup>3</sup> *From forth the west, a shepherd without law.*] Bertrand de Got,

Archbishop of Bourdeaux, who succeeded to the pontificate in 1305,  
 and assumed the title of Clement v. He transferred the holy see  
 to Avignon in 1308 (where it remained till 1376), and died in 1314.

<sup>4</sup> *A new Jason.*] “ But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus,

In Maccabees we read ; and favour such  
As to that priest his king indulgent show'd,  
Shall be of France's monarch <sup>1</sup> shown to him."

I know not if I here too far presumed,  
But in this strain I answer'd : " Tell me now  
What treasures from Saint Peter at the first  
Our Lord demanded, when he put the keys  
Into his charge ? Surely He ask'd no more  
But ' Follow me ! ' Nor Peter, <sup>2</sup> nor the rest,  
Or gold or silver of Matthias took,  
When lots were cast upon the forfeit place  
Of the condemned soul. <sup>3</sup> Abide thou then ;  
Thy punishment of right is merited :  
And look thou well to that ill-gotten coin,  
Which against Charles <sup>4</sup> thy hardihood inspired.  
If reverence of the keys restrain'd me not,  
Which thou in happier time didst hold, I yet  
Severer speech might use. Your avarice  
O'ercasts the world with mourning, under foot  
Treading the good, and raising bad men up,  
Of shepherds like to you, the Evangelist  
Was ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,  
With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld ;  
She who with seven heads tower'd at her birth,  
And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,  
Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.  
Of gold and silver ye have made your god,  
Differing wherein from the idolater,  
But that he worships one, a hundred ye ?  
Ah, Constantine ! <sup>5</sup> to how much ill gave birth,  
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower,

called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, Jason, the brother of Onias, laboured underhand to be high-priest, promising unto the king, by intercession, three hundred and threescore talents of silver, and of another revenue eighty talents." Maccab. b. ii. ch. iv. 7, 8.

<sup>1</sup> *Of France's monarch.*] Philip iv. of France. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. lxxx. <sup>2</sup> *Nor Peter.*] Acts of the Apostles, ch. i. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *The condemned soul.*] Judas. <sup>4</sup> *Against Charles.*] Nicholas iii. was enraged against Charles i., King of Sicily, because he rejected with scorn a proposition made by that pope for an alliance between their families. See G. Villani, Hist. lib. vii. c. liv. <sup>5</sup> *Ah, Constantine !*] He alludes to the pretended gift of the Lateran by Constantine to Sylvester, of which Dante himself seems to imply a

Which the first wealthy Father gain'd from thee."

Meanwhile, as thus I sung, he, whether wrath  
Or conscience smote him, violent upsprang  
Spinning on either sole. I do believe  
My teacher well was pleased, with so composed  
A lip he listen'd ever to the sound  
Of the true words I utter'd. In both arms  
He caught, and, to his bosom lifting me,  
Upward retraced the way of his descent.

Nor weary of his weight, he press'd me close,  
Till to the summit of the rock we came,  
Our passage from the fourth to the fifth pier.  
His cherish'd burden there gently he placed  
Upon the rugged rock and steep, a path  
Not easy for the clambering goat to mount.  
Thence to my view another vale appear'd.

## CANTO XX

### ARGUMENT

The Poet relates the punishment of such as presumed, while living, to predict future events. It is to have their faces reversed and set the contrary way on their limbs, so that, being deprived of the power to see before them, they are constrained ever to walk backwards. Among these Virgil points out to him Amphiaraus, Tiresias, Aruns, and Manto (from the mention of whom he takes occasion to speak of the origin of Mantua), together with several others, who had practised the arts of divination and astrology.

AND now the verse proceeds to torments new,  
Fit argument of this the twentieth strain

doubt in his treatise "*De Monarchiâ*."—"Ergo scindere Imperium, Imperatori non licet. Si ergo aliquæ dignitates per Constantinum essent alienatæ (ut dicunt) ab Imperio," &c., lib. iii. "Therefore to make a rent in the empire exceeds the lawful power of the emperor himself. If, then, some dignities were by Constantine alienated (as they report) from the empire, &c." In another part of the same treatise he speaks of the alienation with less doubt indeed, but not with less disapprobation: "*O felicem populum! O Ausoniam te gloriosam! si vel numquam infirmator imperii tui extitisset; vel numquam sua pia intentio ipsum fefellisset.*"—"O happy people! O glorious Italy! if either he who thus weakened thine empire had never been born, or had never suffered his own pious intentions to mislead him." Lib. ii. *ad finem*.

Of the first song, whose awful theme records  
 The spirits whelm'd in woe. Earnest I look'd  
 Into the depth, that open'd to my view,  
 Moistened with tears of anguish, and beheld  
 A tribe, that came along the hollow vale,  
 In silence weeping : such their step as walk  
 Quires, chanting solemn litanies, on earth.

As on them more direct mine eye descends,  
 Each wonderously seem'd to be reversed  
 At the neck-bone, so that the countenance  
 Was from the reins averted ; and because  
 None might before him look, they were compell'd  
 To advance with backward gait. Thus one per-  
 haps

Hath been by force of palsy clean transposed,  
 But I ne'er saw it nor believe it so.

Now, reader ! think within thyself, so God  
 Fruit of thy reading give thee ! how I long  
 Could keep my visage dry, when I beheld  
 Near me our form distorted in such guise,  
 That on the hinder parts fallen from the face  
 The tears down-streaming roll'd. Against a rock  
 I leant and wept, so that my guide exclaim'd :  
 " What, and art thou, too, witless as the rest ?  
 Here pity most doth show herself alive,  
 When she is dead. What guilt exceedeth his,  
 Who with Heaven's judgment in his passion strives.  
 Raise up thy head, raise up, and see the man  
 Before whose eyes<sup>1</sup> earth gaped in Thebes, when  
 all

Cried out ' Amphiaraüs, whither rushest ?  
 ' Why leavest thou the war ? ' He not the less  
 Fell ruining<sup>2</sup> far as to Minos down,  
 Whose grapple none eludes. Lo ! how he makes  
 The breast his shoulders ; and who once too far  
 Before him wish'd to see, now backward looks,

<sup>1</sup> *Before whose eyes.*] Amphiaraüs, one of the seven kings who besieged Thebes. He is said to have been swallowed up by an opening of the earth. <sup>2</sup> *Ruining.*] "Ruinare." Hence, perhaps, Milton, P. L. b. vi. 868 :

Heaven ruining from heaven.



And treads reverse his path. Tiresias<sup>1</sup> note,  
 Who semblance changed, when woman he became  
 Of male, through every limb transform'd; and then  
 Once more behoved him with his rod to strike  
 The two entwining serpents, ere the plumes,  
 That mark'd the better sex, might shoot again.

"Aruns,<sup>2</sup> with rere his belly facing, comes.  
 On Luni's mountains 'midst the marbles white,  
 Where delves Carrara's hind, who wons beneath,  
 A cavern was his dwelling whence the stars  
 And main sea wide in boundless view he held.

"The next, whose loosen'd tresses overspread  
 Her bosom, which thou seest not (for each hair  
 On that side grows) 'was Manto,<sup>3</sup> she who search'd  
 Through many regions, and at length her seat  
 Fix'd in my native land: whence a short space  
 My words detain thy audience. When her sire  
 From life departed, and in servitude  
 The city dedicate to Bacchus mourn'd,  
 Long time she went a wanderer through the world.  
 Aloft in Italy's delightful land  
 A lake there lies, at foot of that proud Alp  
 That o'er the Tyrol locks Germania in,  
 Its name Benacus, from whose ample breast  
 A thousand springs, methinks, and more, between  
 Camonica<sup>4</sup> and Garda, issuing forth,

<sup>1</sup> *Tiresias.*] — Duo magnorum viridi coëuntia sylvæ  
 Corpora serpentum baculi violaverat ictu,  
 Deque viro factus (mirabile) fœmina, septem  
 Egerat autumnos. Octavo rursus eosdem  
 Vidit. Et, est vestræ si tanta potentia plagæ,  
 Nunc quoque vos feriam. Percussis anguibz isdem  
 Forma prior rediit, genitivaque venit imago.

Ovid., *Metam.* lib. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Aruns.*] Aruns is said to have dwelt in the mountains of Luni (from whence that territory is still called Lunigiana), above Carrara, celebrated for its marble. Lucan, *Phars.* lib. i. 575. <sup>3</sup> *Manto.*] The daughter of Tiresias of Thebes, a city dedicated to Bacchus. From Manto, Mantua, the country of Virgil, derives its name. The Poet proceeds to describe the situation of that place. But see the note to *Purgatorio*, Canto xxii. v. 112. <sup>4</sup> *Camonica.*] Lombardi, instead of

Fra Garda, e val Camonica e Apennino,

reads Fra Garda e val Camonica Pennino,

from the Nidobeatina edition (to which he might have added that of Vellutello in 1544), and two MSS., all of which omit the second con-

Water the Apennine. There is a spot <sup>1</sup>  
 At midway of that lake, where he who bears  
 Of Trento's flock the pastoral staff, with him  
 Of Brescia, and the Veronese, might each  
 Passing that way his benediction give.  
 A garrison of goodly site and strong  
 Peschiera <sup>2</sup> stands, to awe with front opposed  
 The Bergamese and Brescian, whence the shore  
 More slope each way descends. There, whatsoe'er  
 Benacus' bosom holds not, tumbling o'er  
 Down falls, and winds a river flood beneath  
 Through the green pastures. Soon as in his course  
 The stream makes head, Benacus then no more  
 They call the name, but Mincius, till at last  
 Reaching Governo, into Po he falls.  
 Not far his course hath run, when a wide flat  
 It finds, which overstretching as a marsh  
 It covers, pestilent in summer oft.  
 Hence journeying, the savage maiden saw  
 Midst of the fen a territory waste  
 And naked of inhabitants. To shun  
 All human converse, here she with her slaves,  
 Plying her arts, remain'd, and lived, and left  
 Her body tenantless. Thenceforth the tribes,  
 Who round were scatter'd, gathering to that place,  
 Assembled ; for its strength was great, enclosed  
 On all parts by the fen. On those dead bones  
 They rear'd themselves a city, for her sake  
 Calling it Mantua, who first chose the spot,

junction, the only part of the alteration that affects the sense. I have re-translated the passage, which in the former editions stood thus :

—— which a thousand rills  
 Methinks, and more, water between the vale  
 Camonica and Garda, and the height  
 Of Apennine remote.

It should be added, that Vellutello reads "Valdimonica" for "Val Camonica"; but which of these is right remains to be determined by a collation of editions and MSS., and still more perhaps by a view of the country in the neighbourhood of the lake (now called the Lago di Garda), with a reference to this passage.

<sup>1</sup> *There is a spot.*] Prato di Fame, where the dioceses of Trento, Verona, and Brescia meet. <sup>2</sup> *Peschiera.*] A garrison situated to the south of the lake, where it empties itself and forms the Mincius.

Nor ask'd another omen for the name ;  
 Wherein more numerous the people dwelt,  
 Ere Casalodi's madness <sup>1</sup> by deceit  
 Was wrong'd of Pinamonte. If thou hear  
 Henceforth another origin <sup>2</sup> assign'd  
 Of that my country, I forewarn thee now  
 That falsehood none beguile thee of the truth."

I answer'd : " Teacher, I conclude thy words  
 So certain, that all else shall be to me  
 As embers lacking life. But now of these,  
 Who here proceed, instruct me, if thou see  
 Any that merit more especial note.  
 For thereon is my mind alone intent."

He straight replied : " That spirit, from whose cheek  
 The beard sweeps o'er his shoulders brown, what time  
 Græcia was emptied of her males, that scarce  
 The cradles were supplied, the seer was he  
 In Aulis, who with Calchas gave the sign  
 When first to cut the cable. Him they named  
 Eurypilus : so sings my tragic strain,<sup>3</sup>  
 In which majestic measure well thou know'st,  
 Who know'st it all. That other, round the loins  
 So slender of his shape, was Michael Scot,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Casalodi's madness.*] Alberto da Casalodi, who had got possession of Mantua, was persuaded, by Pinamonte Buonacossi, that he might ingratiate himself with the people by banishing to their own castles the nobles, who were obnoxious to them. No sooner was this done, than Pinamonte put himself at the head of the populace, drove out Casalodi and his adherents, and obtained the sovereignty for himself.

<sup>2</sup> *Another origin.*] Lombardi refers to Servius on the Tenth Book of the *Æneid*. Alii a Tarchone Tyrrheni fratre conditam dicunt Mantuam autem ideo nominatam quia Etrusca lingua Mantum ditem patrem appellant.

<sup>3</sup> *So sings my tragic strain.*]

Suspensi Eurypilum scitatum oracula Phœbi

Mittimus.—

Virg., *Æn.* ii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> *Michael Scot.*] I make no apology for adding the following curious particulars extracted from the notes to Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. " Sir Michael Scott, of Balwearie, flourished during the thirteenth century, and was one of the ambassadors sent to bring the Maid of Norway to Scotland upon the death of Alexander III. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle, printed at Venice in 1496, and several treatises upon natural philosophy, from which he appears to have been addicted to the abstruse studies of judicial astrology, alchymy, physiognomy, and chiromancy. Hence he passed among

Practised in every slight of magic wile.

“ Guido Bonatti <sup>1</sup> see : Asdente <sup>2</sup> mark,  
Who now were willing he had tended still  
The thread and cordwain, and too late repents.

“ See next the wretches, who the needle left.  
The shuttle and the spindle, and became  
Diviners : baneful witcheries they wrought  
With images and herbs. But onward now :

his contemporaries for a skilful magician. Dempster informs us, that he remembers to have heard in his youth, that the magic books of Michael Scott were still in existence, but could not be opened without danger, on account of the fiends who were thereby invoked. Dempster, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1627, lib. xii. p. 495. Leslie characterises Michael Scott as ‘Singulari philosophiæ astronomiæ ac medicinæ laude præstans, dicebatur penitissimos magiæ recessus indagasse.’ A personage thus spoken of by biographers and historians loses little of his mystical fame in vulgar tradition. Accordingly, the memory of Sir Michael Scott survives in many a legend ; and in the south of Scotland any work of great labour and antiquity is ascribed either to the agency of Auld Michael, of Sir William Wallace, or of the devil. Tradition varies concerning the place of his burial : some contend for Holme Coltrame in Cumberland, others for Melrose Abbey : but all agree that his books of magic were interred in his grave, or preserved in the convent where he died.” The Lay of the Last Minstrel, by Walter Scott, Eng., Lond. 4to, 1805, p. 234, notes. Mr. Walton, speaking of the new translations of Aristotle from the original Greek into Latin, about the twelfth century, observes : “ I believe the translators understood very little Greek. Our countryman, Michael Scotus, was one of the first of them ; who was assisted by Andrew, a Jew. Michael was astrologer to Frederic II., Emperor of Germany, and appears to have executed his translations at Toledo in Spain, about the year 1220. These new versions were perhaps little more than corrections from those of the early Arabians, made under the inspection of the learned Spanish Saracens.” History of English Poetry, vol. i. dissert. ii. and sect. ix. p. 292. Among the Canonici MSS. in the Bodleian, I have seen (No. 520) the astrological works of Michael Scott, on vellum, with an illuminated portrait of him at the beginning.

<sup>1</sup> *Guido Bonatti*.] An astrologer of Forlì, on whose skill Guido da Montefeltro, lord of that place, so much relied, that he is reported never to have gone into battle, except in the hour recommended to him as fortunate by Bonatti. Landino and Vellutello speak of a book which he composed on the subject of his art. Macchiavelli mentions him in the History of Florence, l. i. p. 24, ed. 1550. “ He flourished about 1230 and 1260. Though a learned astronomer he was seduced by astrology, through which he was greatly in favour with many princes of that time. His many works are miserably spoiled by it.” Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d’Italia*, t. 1, p. 118, 8vo, 1786. He is referred to in Brown’s *Vulgar Errors*, b. 4, c. 12. <sup>2</sup> *Asdente*.] A shoemaker at Parma, who deserted his business to practise the arts of divination. How much this man had attracted the public notice appears from a passage in our author’s *Convito*, p. 179, where it is said, in speaking

For now doth Cain with fork of thorns <sup>1</sup> confine  
 On either hemisphere, touching the wave  
 Beneath the towers of Seville. Yesternight  
 The moon was round. Thou mayst remember well :  
 For she good service did thee in the gloom  
 Of the deep wood." This said, both onward moved.

## CANTO XXI

## ARGUMENT

Still in the eighth circle, which bears the name of Malebolge, they look down from the bridge that passes over its fifth gulf, upon the barterers or public peculators. These are plunged in a lake of boiling pitch, and guarded by demons, to whom Virgil, leaving Dante apart, presents himself; and license being obtained to pass onward, both pursue their way.

THUS we from bridge to bridge, with other talk,  
 The which my drama cares not to rehearse,  
 Pass'd on; and to the summit reaching, stood  
 To view another gap, within the round  
 Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.

Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place.

In the Venetians' arsenal as boils  
 Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to smear  
 Their unsound vessels; for the inclement time  
 Sea-faring men restrains, and in that while  
 His bark one builds anew, another stops  
 The ribs of his that hath made many a voyage,  
 One hammers at the prow, one at the poop,  
 This shapeth oars, that other cables twirls,  
 The mizen one repairs, and main-sail rent;  
 So, not by force of fire but art divine,  
 Boil'd <sup>2</sup> here a glutinous thick mass, that round

of the derivation of the word "noble," that "if those who were best known were accounted the most noble, Asdente, the shoemaker of Parma, would be more noble than anyone in that city."

<sup>1</sup> *Cain with fork of thorns.*] By Cain and the thorns, or what is still vulgarly called the Man in the Moon, the Poet denotes that luminary. The same superstition is alluded to in the *Paradiso*, Canto ii. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Boil'd.*] *Vidi flumen magno de Inferno procedere ardens, atque piceum.* Alberici, *Visio*, § 17.

Limed all the shore beneath. I that beheld,  
 But therein nought distinguish'd, save the bubbles  
 Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell  
 Heave,<sup>1</sup> and by turns subsiding fall. While there  
 I fix'd my ken below, "Mark ! mark !" my guide  
 Exclaiming, drew me towards him from the place  
 Wherein I stood. I turn'd myself, as one  
 Impatient to behold that which beheld  
 He needs must shun, whom sudden fear unmans,  
 - That he his flight delays not for the view.  
 Behind me I discern'd a devil black,  
 That running up advanced along the rock.  
 Ah ! what fierce cruelty his look bespake.  
 In act how bitter did he seem, with wings  
 Buoyant outstretch'd and feet of nimblest tread.  
 His shoulder, proudly eminent and sharp,  
 Was with a sinner charged ; by either haunch  
 He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.

"Ye of our bridge !" he cried, "keen-talon'd  
 fiends !

Lo ! one of Santa Zita's elders.<sup>2</sup> Him  
 Whelm ye beneath, while I return for more.  
 That land hath store of such. All men are there,  
 Except Bonturo, barterers : <sup>3</sup> of ' no '  
 For lucre there an ' ay ' is quickly made."

Him dashing down, o'er the rough rock he turn'd ;  
 Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed  
 Sped with like eager haste. That other sank,  
 And forthwith writhing to the surface rose.  
 But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge,  
 Cried, " Here the hallow'd visage <sup>4</sup> saves not ! here

<sup>1</sup> ——— One mighty swell

Heave.] Vidi etiam os putei magnum flammam emittentem, et nunc sursum nunc deorsum descendentem. Alberici, Visio, § 11.

<sup>2</sup> One of Santa Zita's elders.] The elders or chief magistrates of Lucca, where Santa Zita was held in especial veneration. The name of this sinner is supposed to have been Martino Botaio. <sup>3</sup> Except Bonturo, barterers.] This is said ironically of Bonturo de' Dati. By barterers are meant peculators of every description ; all who traffic the interests of the public for their own private advantage. <sup>4</sup> The hallow'd visage.] A representation of the head of our Saviour venerated at Lucca.



Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave,<sup>1</sup>  
 Wherefore, if thou desire we rend thee not,  
 Take heed thou mount not o'er the pitch." This said,  
 They grappled him with more than hundred hooks,  
 And shouted : " Cover'd thou must sport thee here ;  
 So, if thou canst, in secret mayst thou filch."  
 E'en thus the cook bestirs him, with his grooms,  
 To thrust the flesh <sup>2</sup> into the caldron down  
 With flesh-hooks, that it float not on the top.

Me then my guide bespake : " Lest they descry  
 That thou art here, behind a craggy rock  
 Bend low and skreen thee : and whate'er of force  
 Be offer'd me, or insult, fear thou not ;  
 For I am well advised, who have been erst  
 In the like fray." Beyond the bridge's head  
 Therewith he pass'd ; and reaching the sixth pier,  
 Behoved him then a forehead terror-proof.

With storm and fury, as when dogs rush forth  
 Upon the poor man's back, who suddenly  
 From whence he standeth makes his suit ; so rush'd  
 Those from beneath the arch, and against him  
 Their weapons all they pointed. He, aloud :  
 " Be none of you outrageous : ere your time  
 Dare seize me, come forth from amongst you one,  
 Who having heard my words, decide he then  
 If he shall tear these limbs." They shouted loud,  
 " Go, Malacoda ! " Whereat one advanced,  
 The others standing firm, and as he came,  
 " What may this turn avail him ? " he exclaim'd.

" Believest thou, Malacoda ! I had come  
 Thus far from all your skirmishing secure,"  
 My teacher answer'd, " without will divine  
 And destiny propitious ? Pass we then ;  
 For so Heaven's pleasure is, that I should lead  
 Another through this savage wilderness."

<sup>1</sup> *Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave.*]

Qui si nuota altrimenti che nel Serchio.

Serchio is the river that flows by Lucca. <sup>2</sup> *The flesh.*] In eundem flumen corruunt : rursumque assurgentes, ac denuo recidentes, tandiu ibidem cruciantur, donec in morem carrium excocti, &c. Alberici, Visio, § 17.

Forthwith so fell his pride, that he let drop  
 The instrument of torture at his feet,  
 And to the rest exclaim'd : " We have no power  
 To strike him." Then to me my guide : " O thou !  
 Who on the bridge among the crags dost sit  
 Low crouching, safely now to me return."

I rose, and towards him moved with speed ; the  
 fiends  
 Meantime all forward drew : me terror seized,  
 Lest they should break the compact they had made.  
 Thus issuing from Caprona,<sup>1</sup> once I saw  
 The infantry, dreading lest his covenant  
 The foe should break ; so close he hemm'd them  
 round.

I to my leader's side adhered, mine eyes  
 With fixt and motionless observance bent  
 On their unkindly visage. They their hooks  
 Protruding, one the other thus bespake :  
 " Wilt thou I touch him on the hip ? " To whom  
 Was answer'd : " Even so ; nor miss thy aim."

But he, who was in conference with my guide,  
 Turn'd rapid round ; and thus the demon spake :  
 " Stay, stay thee, Scarmiglione ! " Then to us  
 He added : " Further footing to your step  
 This rock affords not, shiver'd to the base  
 Of the sixth arch. But would ye still proceed,  
 Up by this cavern go : not distant far,  
 Another rock will yield you passage safe.  
 Yesterday,<sup>2</sup> later by five hours than now.  
 Twelve hundred threescore years and six had fill'd  
 The circuit of their course, since here the way

<sup>1</sup> *From Caprona.*] The surrender of the castle of Caprona to the combined forces of Florence and Lucca, on condition that the garrison should march out in safety, to which event Dante was a witness, took place in 1290. See G. Villani, *Hist. lib. vii. c. cxxxvi.* <sup>2</sup> *Yesterday.*] This passage fixes the era of Dante's descent at Good Friday, in the year 1300 (thirty-four years from our blessed Lord's incarnation being added to 1266), and at the thirty-fifth year of our Poet's age. See Canto i. v. 1. The awful event alluded to, the Evangelists inform us, happened " at the ninth hour," that is, our sixth, when " the rocks were rent," and the convulsion, according to Dante, was felt even in the depths of hell. See Canto xii. v. 38.

Was broken. Thitherward I straight dispatch  
 Certain of these my scouts, who shall espy  
 If any on the surface bask. With them  
 Go ye: for ye shall find them nothing fell.  
 Come, Alichino, forth," with that he cried,  
 "And Calcabrina, and Cagnazzo thou!  
 The troop of ten let Barbariccia lead.  
 With Libicocco, Draghinazzo haste,  
 Fang'd Ciriatto, Graffiacane fierce,  
 And Farfarello, and mad Rubicant.  
 Search ye around the bubbling tar. For these,  
 In safety lead them, where the other crag  
 Uninterrupted traverses the dens."

I then: "O master! what a sight is there.  
 Ah! without escort, journey we alone,  
 Which, if thou know the way, I covet not.  
 Unless thy prudence fail thee, dost not mark  
 How they do gnarl upon us, and their scowl  
 Threatens us present tortures?" He replied:  
 "I charge thee, fear not: let them, as they will,  
 Gnarl on: 'tis but in token of their spite  
 Against the souls who mourn in torment steep'd."

To leftward o'er the pier they turn'd; but each  
 Had first between his teeth prest close the tongue,  
 Toward their leader for a signal looking,  
 Which he with sound obscene <sup>1</sup> triumphant gave.

## CANTO XXII

### ARGUMENT

Virgil and Dante proceed, accompanied by the demons, and see other sinners of the same description in the same gulf. The device of Ciampolo, one of these, to escape from the demons, who had laid hold on him.

It hath been heretofore my chance to see  
 Horsemen with martial order shifting camp,

<sup>1</sup> *With sound obscene.*] Compare the original with Aristophanes, Nubes. 165:

————— σάλπιγξ ὁ προακτὸς ἑστίν.

To onset sallying, or in muster ranged,  
Or in retreat sometimes outstretch'd for flight :  
Light-armed squadrons and fleet foragers  
Scouring thy plains, Arezzo ! have I seen,  
And clashing tournaments, and tilting jousts,  
Now with the sound of trumpets, now of bells,  
Tabors, or signals made from castled heights,  
And with inventions multiform, our own,  
Or introduced from foreign land ; but ne'er  
To such a strange recorder I beheld,  
In evolution moving, horse nor foot,  
Nor ship, that tack'd by sign from land or star.

With the ten demons on our way we went ;  
Ah, fearful company ! but in the church  
With saints, with gluttons at the tavern's mess.  
Still earnest on the pitch I gazed, to mark  
All things whate'er the chasm contain'd,<sup>1</sup> and those  
Who burn'd within. As dolphins that, in sign  
To mariners, heave high their arched backs,  
That thence forewarn'd they may advise to save  
Their threaten'd vessel ; so, at intervals,  
To ease the pain, his back some sinner show'd,  
Then hid more nimbly than the lightning-glance.

E'en as the frogs, that of a watery moat  
Stand at the brink, with the jaws only out,  
Their feet and of the trunk all else conceal'd,  
Thus on each part the sinners stood ; but soon  
As Barbariccia was at hand, so they  
Drew back under the wave. I saw, and yet  
My heart doth stagger, one, that waited thus,  
As it befalls that oft one frog remains,  
While the next springs away : and Graffiacan,  
Who of the fiends was nearest, grappling seized  
His clotted locks, and dragg'd him sprawling up,  
That he appear'd to me an otter. Each  
Already by their names I knew, so well  
When they were chosen I observed, and mark'd  
How one the other call'd. " O Rubicant !

<sup>1</sup> *Whate'er the chasm contain'd.*] Monti, in his *Proposta*, interprets "contegno" to mean, not "contents" but "state," "condition."

See that his hide thou with thy talons flay,"  
Shouted together all the cursed crew.

Then I: "Inform thee, master! if thou may,  
What wretched soul is this, on whom their hands  
His foes have laid." My leader to his side  
Approach'd, and whence he came inquired; to whom  
Was answer'd thus: "Born in Navarre's domain,<sup>1</sup>  
My mother placed me in a lord's retinue;  
For she had borne me to a losel vile,  
A spendthrift of his substance and himself,  
The good king Thibault <sup>2</sup> after that I served:  
To peculating here my thoughts were turn'd.  
Whereof I give account in this dire heat."

Straight Ciriatto, from whose mouth a tusk  
Issued on either side, as from a boar,  
Ripp'd him with one of these. 'Twixt evil claws  
The mouse had fallen: but Barbariccia cried,  
Seizing him with both arms: "Stand thou apart  
While I do fix him on my prong transpierced."  
Then added, turning to my guide his face,  
"Inquire of him, if more thou wish to learn,  
Ere he again be rent." My leader thus:  
"Then tell us of the partners in thy guilt;  
Knowest thou any sprung of Latian land  
Under the tar?"—"I parted," he replied,  
"But now from one, who sojourn'd not far thence;

<sup>1</sup> *Born in Navarre's domain.*] The name of this peculator is said to have been Ciampolo. <sup>2</sup> *The good king Thibault.*] "Thibault 1., King of Navarre, died on the 8th of June, 1233, as much to be commended for the desire he showed of aiding the war in the Holy Land, as reprehensible and faulty for his design of oppressing the rights and privileges of the church; on which account it is said that the whole kingdom was under an interdict for the space of three entire years.—Thibault undoubtedly merits praise, as for his other endowments, so especially for his cultivation of the liberal arts, his exercise and knowledge of music and poetry, in which he so much excelled; that he was accustomed to compose verses and sing them to the viol, and to exhibit his poetical compositions publicly in his palace, that they might be criticised by all." Mariana, *History of Spain*, b. xiii. c. 9. Dante twice quotes one of his verses in the *Treatise de Vulg. Eloq.* lib. i. c. ix. and lib. ii. c. v., and refers to him again, lib. ii. c. vi. From "the good king Thibault" was descended the good, but more unfortunate monarch, Louis XVI. of France. See Henault, *Abrégé Chron.* 1252, 3, 4.

So were I under shelter now with him,  
Nor hook nor talon then should scare me more."

"Too long we suffer," Libicocco cried;  
Then, darting forth a prong, seized on his arm,  
And mangled bore away the sinewy part.  
Him Draghinazzo by his thighs beneath  
Would next have caught; whence angrily their chief,  
Turning on all sides round, with threatening brow  
Restrain'd them. When their strife a little ceased,  
Of him, who yet was gazing on his wound,  
My teacher thus without delay inquired:  
"Who was the spirit, from whom by evil hap  
Parting, as thou hast told, thou camest to shore?"--

"It was the friar Gomita,"<sup>1</sup> he rejoin'd,  
"He of Gallura, vessel of all guile,  
Who had his master's enemies in hand,  
And used them so that they commend him well.  
Money he took, and them at large dismiss'd;  
So he reports; and in each other charge  
Committed to his keeping play'd the part  
Of barterer to the height. With him doth herd  
The chief of Logodoro, Michel Zanche.<sup>2</sup>  
Sardinia is a theme whereof their tongue  
Is never weary. Out! alas! behold  
That other, how he grins. More would I say,  
But tremble lest he mean to maul me sore."

Their captain then to Farfarello turning,  
Who roll'd his moony eyes in act to strike,  
Rebuked him thus: "Off, cursed bird! avaunt!"

"If ye desire to see or hear," he thus  
Quaking with dread resumed, "or Tuscan spirits  
Or Lombard, I will cause them to appear,  
Meantime let these ill talons bate their fury,  
So that no vengeance they may fear from them,

<sup>1</sup> *The friar Gomita.*] He was intrusted by Nino de' Visconti with the government of Gallura, one of the four jurisdictions into which Sardinia was divided. Having his master's enemies in his power he took a bribe from them, and allowed them to escape. Mention of Nino will recur in the notes to Canto xxxiii. and in the Purgatorio, Canto viii. <sup>2</sup> *Michel Zanche.*] The president of Logodoro, another of the four Sardinian jurisdictions. See Canto xxxiii., note to v. 136.



And I, remaining in this self-same place,  
Will, for myself but one, make seven appear,  
When my shrill whistle shall be heard : for so  
Our custom is to call each other up."

Cagnazzo at that word deriding grinn'd,  
Then wagg'd the head and spake : " Hear his device,  
Mischievous as he is, to plunge him down."

Whereto he thus, who fail'd not in rich store  
Of nice-wove toils : " Mischief, forsooth, extreme !  
Meant only to procure myself more woe."

No longer Alichino then refrain'd,  
But this, the rest gainsaying, him bespake :  
" If thou do cast thee down, I not on foot  
Will chase thee, but above the pitch will beat  
My plumes. Quit we the vantage ground, and let  
The bank be as a shield ; that we may see,  
If singly thou prevail against us all."

Now, reader, of new sport expect to hear.

They each one turn'd his eyes to the other shore,  
He first, who was the hardest to persuade.  
The spirit of Navarre chose well his time,  
Planted his feet on land, and at one leap  
Escaping, disappointed their resolve.

Them quick resentment stung, but him the most  
Who was the cause of failure : in pursuit  
He therefore sped, exclaiming, " Thou art caught."

But little it avail'd ; terror outstripp'd  
His following flight ; the other plunged beneath,  
And he with upward pinion raised his breast :  
E'en thus the water-fowl, when she perceives  
The falcon near, dives instant down, while he  
Enraged and spent retires. That mockery  
In Calcabrina fury stirr'd, who flew  
After him, with desire of strife inflamed ;  
And, for the barterer had 'scaped, so turn'd  
His talons on his comrade. O'er the dyke  
In grapple close they join'd ; but the other proved  
A goshawk able to rend well his foe ;  
And in the boiling lake both fell. The heat  
Was umpire soon between them ; but in vain

To lift themselves they strove, so fast were glued  
 Their pennons. Barbariccia, as the rest,  
 That chance lamenting, four in flight dispatch'd  
 From the other coast, with all their weapons arm'd.  
 They, to their post on each side speedily  
 Descending, stretch'd their hooks toward the fiends,  
 Who flounder'd, inly burning from their scars :  
 And we departing left them to that broil.

## CANTO XXIII

## ARGUMENT

The enraged demons pursue Dante, but he is preserved from them by Virgil. On reaching the sixth gulf he beholds the punishment of the hypocrites ; which is, to pace continually round the gulf under the pressure of caps and hoods, that are gilt on the outside, but leaden within. He is addressed by two of these, Catalano and Loderingo, Knights of Saint Mary, otherwise called Joyous Friars of Bologna. Caiaphas is seen fixed to a cross on the ground, and lies so stretched along the way, that all tread on him in passing.

IN silence and in solitude we went,  
 One first, the other following his steps,  
 As minor friars journeying on their road.

The present fray had turn'd my thoughts to muse  
 Upon old Æsop's fable,<sup>1</sup> where he told  
 What fate unto the mouse and frog befel ;  
 For language hath not sounds more like in sense,  
 Than are these chances, if the origin  
 And end of each be heedfully compared.  
 And as one thought bursts from another forth,  
 So afterward from that another sprang,  
 Which added doubly to my former fear.  
 For thus I reason'd : " These through us have been  
 So foil'd, with loss and mockery so complete,  
 As needs must sting them sore. If anger then

<sup>1</sup> *Æsop's fable.*] The fable of the frog, who offered to carry the mouse across a ditch, with the intention of drowning him, when both were carried off by a kite. It is not among those Greek fables which go under the name of Æsop.

Be to their evil will conjoin'd, more fell  
They shall pursue us, than the savage hound  
Snatches the leveret panting 'twixt his jaws."

Already I perceived my hair stand all  
On end with terror, and look'd eager back.

"Teacher," I thus began, "if speedily  
Thyself and me thou hide not, much I dread  
Those evil talons. Even now behind  
They urge us: quick imagination works  
So forcibly, that I already feel them."

He answer'd: "Were I form'd of leaded glass  
I should not sooner draw unto myself  
Thy outward image, than I now imprint  
That from within. This moment came thy thoughts  
Presented before mine, with similar act  
And countenance similar, so that from both  
I one design have framed. If the right coast  
Incline so much, that we may thence descend  
Into the other chasm, we shall escape  
Secure from this imagined pursuit."

He had not spoke<sup>1</sup> his purpose to the end,  
When I from far beheld them with spread wings  
Approach to take us. Suddenly my guide  
Caught me, even as a mother that from sleep  
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees  
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe  
And flies ne'er pausing, careful more of him  
Than of herself, that but a single vest  
Clings round her limbs. Down from the jutting beach  
Supine he cast him to that pendent rock,  
Which closes on one part the other chasm.

Never ran water with such hurrying pace  
Adown the tube to turn a land-mill's wheel,  
When nearest it approaches to the spokes,  
As then along that edge my master ran,

<sup>1</sup> *He had not spoke.*] Cumque ego cum angelis relictus starem pavidus, unus ex illis tartareis ministris horridis (Qu. horridus?) hispidis (Qu. hispidus?) aspectuque procerus festinus adveniens me impellere, et quomodocumque nocere conabatur: cum ecce apostolus velocius accurrens, meque subito arripiens in quendam locum gloriose projecit visionis. Alberici, Visio, § 15.

Carrying me in his bosom, as a child,  
Not a companion. Scarcely had his feet  
Reach'd to the lowest of the bed beneath,  
When over us the steep they reach'd : but fear  
In him was none ; for that high Providence,  
Which placed them ministers of the fifth foss,  
Power of departing thence took from them all.

There in the depth we saw a painted tribe,  
Who paced with tardy steps around, and wept,  
Faint in appearance and o'ercome with toil.  
Caps had they on, with hoods, that fell low down  
Before their eyes, in fashion like to those  
Worn by the monks in Cologne.<sup>1</sup> Their outside  
Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to view,  
But leaden all within, and of such weight.  
That Frederick's<sup>2</sup> compared to these were straw.  
Oh, everlasting wearisome attire !

We yet once more with them together turn'd  
To leftward, on their dismal moan intent.  
But by the weight opprest, so slowly came  
The fainting people, that our company  
Was changed, at every movement of the step.

Whence I my guide address'd : " See that thou find  
Some spirit, whose name may by his deeds be known ;  
And to that end look round thee as thou go'st."

Then one, who understood the Tuscan voice,  
Cried after us aloud : " Hold in your feet,  
Ye who so swiftly speed through the dusk air.  
Perchance from me thou shalt obtain thy wish."

Whereat my leader, turning, me bespake :  
" Pause, and then onward at their pace proceed."

I staid, and saw two spirits in whose look  
Impatient eagerness of mind was mark'd  
To overtake me ; but the load they bare  
And narrow path retarded their approach.

Soon as arrived, they with an eye askance

<sup>1</sup> *Monks in Cologne.*] They wore their cowls unusually large.  
<sup>2</sup> *Frederick's.*] The Emperor Frederick II. is said to have punished those who were guilty of high treason by wrapping them up in lead and casting them into a furnace.

Perused me, but spake not : then turning, each  
 To other thus conferring said : " This one  
 Seems, by the action of his throat, alive ;  
 And, be they dead, what privilege allows  
 They walk unmantled by the cumbrous stole ? "

Then thus to me : " Tuscan, who visitest  
 The college of the mourning hypocrites,  
 Disdain not to instruct us who thou art."

" By Arno's pleasant stream," I thus replied,  
 " In the great city I was bred and grew,  
 And wear the body I have ever worn.  
 But who are ye, from whom such mighty grief,  
 As now I witness, courseth down your cheeks ?  
 What torment breaks forth in this bitter woe ? "

" Our bonnets gleaming bright with orange hue " <sup>1</sup>  
 One of them answer'd, " are so leaden gross,  
 That with their weight they make the balances  
 To crack beneath them. Joyous friars <sup>2</sup> we were,  
 Bologna's natives ; Catalano I,

<sup>1</sup> *Our bonnets gleaming bright with orange hue.*] It is observed by Venturi, that the word "rance" does not here signify "rancid or disgusting," as it is explained by the old commentators, but "orange-coloured," in which sense it occurs in the Purgatorio, Canto ii. 9.  
<sup>2</sup> *Joyous friars.*] "Those who ruled the city of Florence on the part of the Ghibellines perceiving this discontent and murmuring, which they were fearful might produce a rebellion against themselves, in order to satisfy the people, made choice of two knights, Frati Godenti (joyous friars) of Bologna, on whom they conferred the chief power in Florence ; one named M. Catalano de' Malavolti, the other M. Loderingo di Liandolo ; one an adherent of the Guelph, the other of the Ghibelline party. It is to be remarked, that the Joyous Friars were called Knights of St. Mary, and became knights on taking that habit : their robes were white, the mantle sable, and the arms a white field and red cross with two stars : their office was to defend widows and orphans ; they were to act as mediators ; they had internal regulations, like other religious bodies. The above-mentioned M. Loderingo was the founder of that order. But it was not long before they too well deserved the appellation given them, and were found to be more bent on enjoying themselves than on any other object. These two friars were called in by the Florentines, and had a residence assigned them in the palace belonging to the people, over against the abbey. Such was the dependence placed on the character of their order, that it was expected they would be impartial, and would save the commonwealth any unnecessary expense ; instead of which, though inclined to opposite parties, they secretly and hypocritically concurred in promoting their own advantage rather than the public good." G. Villani, b. vii. c. xiii. This happened in 1266.

He Loderingo named ; and by thy land  
 Together taken, as men use to take  
 A single and indifferent arbiter,  
 To reconcile their strifes. How there we sped,  
 Gardingo's vicinage <sup>1</sup> can best declare."

"O friars!" I began, "your miseries——"  
 But there brake off, for one had caught mine  
 eye,

Fix'd to a cross with three stakes on the ground :  
 He, when he saw me, writhed himself, throughout  
 Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs his beard.  
 And Catalano, who thereof was 'ware,  
 Thus spake : "That pierced spirit,<sup>2</sup> whom intent  
 Thou view'st, was he who gave the Pharisees  
 Counsel, that it were fitting for one man  
 To suffer for the people. He doth lie  
 Transverse ; nor any passes, but him first  
 Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.  
 In straits like this along the foss are placed  
 The father of his consort,<sup>3</sup> and the rest  
 Partakers in that council, seed of ill  
 And sorrow to the Jews." I noted then,  
 How Virgil gazed with wonder upon him,  
 Thus abjectly extended on the cross  
 In banishment eternal. To the friar  
 He next his words address'd : "We pray ye tell,  
 If so be lawful, whether on our right  
 Lies any opening in the rock, whereby  
 We both may issue hence, without constraint  
 On the dark angels, that compell'd they come  
 To lead us from this depth." He thus replied :  
 "Nearer than thou dost hope, there is a rock  
 From the great <sup>4</sup> circle moving, which o'ersteps  
 Each vale of horror, save that here his cope  
 Is shatter'd. By the ruin ye may mount :

<sup>1</sup> *Gardingio's vicinage.*] The name of that party of the city which was inhabited by the powerful Ghibelline family of the Uberti, and destroyed under the partial and iniquitous administration of Catalano and Loderingo. <sup>2</sup> *That pierced spirit.*] Caiaphas. <sup>3</sup> *The father of his consort.*] Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas. <sup>4</sup> *Great.*] In the former editions it was printed "next."



For on the side it slants, and most the height  
Rises below." With head bent down awhile  
My leader stood ; then spake : " He warn'd us ill,<sup>1</sup>  
Who yonder hangs the sinners on his hook."

To whom the friar : " At Bologna erst  
I many vices of the devil heard ;  
Among the rest was said, ' He is a liar,  
' And the father of lies ! ' " When he had spoke,  
My leader with large strides proceeded on,  
Somewhat disturb'd with anger in his look.

I therefore left the spirits heavy laden,  
And, following, his beloved footsteps mark'd.

## CANTO XXIV

### ARGUMENT

Under the escort of his faithful master, Dante not without difficulty makes his way out of the sixth gulf ; and in the seventh, sees the robbers tormented by venomous and pestilent serpents. The soul of Vanni Fucci, who had pillaged the sacristy of Saint James in Pistoia, predicts some calamities that impended over that city, and over the Florentines.

In the year's early nonage,<sup>2</sup> when the sun  
Tempers his tresses in Aquarius' urn,  
And now towards equal day the nights recede ;  
When as the rime upon the earth puts on  
Her dazzling sister's image, but not long  
Her milder sway endures ; then riseth up  
The village hind, whom fails his wintry store,  
And looking out beholds the plain around  
All whiten'd ; whence impatiently he smites  
His thighs, and to his hut returning in,  
There paces to and fro, wailing his lot,  
As a discomfited and helpless man ;

<sup>1</sup> *He warn'd us ill.*] He refers to the falsehood told him by the demon. Canto xxi. 108. <sup>2</sup> *In the year's early nonage.*] "At the latter part of January, when the sun enters into Aquarius, and the equinox is drawing near, when the hoar-frosts in the morning often wear the appearance of snow, but are melted by the rising sun."

Then comes he forth again, and feels new hope  
Spring in his bosom, finding e'en thus soon  
The world hath changed its countenance, grasps his  
crook,

And forth to pasture drives his little flock :  
So me my guide dishearten'd, when I saw  
His troubled forehead ; and so speedily  
That ill was cured ; for at the fallen bridge  
Arriving, towards me with a look as sweet,  
He turn'd him back, as that I first beheld  
At the steep mountain's foot. Regarding well  
The ruin, and some counsel first maintain'd  
With his own thought, he open'd wide his arm  
And took me up. As one, who, while he works,  
Computes his labour's issue, that he seems  
Still to foresee the effect ; so lifting me  
Up to the summit of one peak, he fix'd  
His eye upon another. " Grapple that,"  
Said he, " but first make proof, if it be such  
As will sustain thee." For one capt with lead  
This were no journey. Scarcely he, though light,  
And I, though onward push'd from crag to crag,  
Could mount. And if the precinct of this coast  
Were not less ample than the last, for him  
I know not, but my strength had surely fail'd.  
But Malebolge all toward the mouth  
Inclining of the nethermost abyss,  
The site of every valley hence requires,  
That one side upward slope, the other fall.

At length the point from whence the utmost stone  
Juts down, we reach'd ; soon as to that arrived,  
So was the breath exhausted from my lungs  
I could no further, but did seat me there.

" Now needs thy best of man " ; so spake my  
guide :

" For not on downy plumes, nor under shade  
Of canopy reposing, fame is won ;  
Without which whosoe'er consumes his days,  
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth,  
As smoke in air or foam upon the wave.

Thou therefore rise : vanquish thy weariness <sup>1</sup>  
 By the mind's effort, in each struggle form'd  
 To vanquish, if she suffer not the weight  
 Of her corporeal frame to crush her down.  
 A longer ladder yet remains to scale.  
 From these to have escaped sufficeth not,  
 If well thou note me, profit by my words."

I straightway rose, and show'd myself less spent  
 Than I in truth did feel me. "On," I cried,  
 "For I am stout and fearless." Up the rock  
 Our way we held, more rugged than before,  
 Narrower, and steeper far to climb. From talk  
 I ceased not, as we journey'd, so to seem  
 Least faint ; whereat a voice from the other foss  
 Did issue forth, for utterance suited ill.  
 Though on the arch that crosses there I stood,  
 What were the words I knew not, but who spake  
 Seem'd moved in anger. Down I stoop'd to look ;  
 But my quick eye might reach not to the depth  
 For shrouding darkness ; wherefore thus I spake :  
 "To the next circle, teacher, bend thy steps,  
 And from the wall dismount we ; for as hence  
 I hear and understand not, so I see  
 Beneath, and nought discern."—"I answer not,"  
 Said he, "but by the deed. To fair request  
 Silent performance maketh best return."

We from the bridge's head descended, where  
 To the eighth mound it joins ; and then, the chasm  
 Opening to view, I saw a crowd within  
 Of serpents <sup>2</sup> terrible, so strange of shape  
 And hideous, that remembrance in my veins  
 Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands <sup>3</sup>  
 Let Libya vaunt no more : if Jaculus,

<sup>1</sup> *Vanquish thy weariness.*]

Quin corpus onustum  
 Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravat una,  
 Atque affigit humi divinæ particulam auræ.

Hor., Sat. ii. lib. ii. 78.

<sup>2</sup> *Serpents.*] Vidi locum horridum tenebrosum foetoribus exhalantibus flammis crepitantibus serpentibus, draconibus — repletum. Alberici, Visio, § 12. <sup>3</sup> *Of her sands.*] Compare Lucan, Phars. lib. ix. 703.

Pareas and Chelyder be her brood,  
 Cenchris and Amphisbæna, plagues so dire  
 Or in such numbers swarming ne'er she show'd,  
 Not with all Ethiopia, and whate'er  
 Above the Erythræan sea is spawn'd.

Amid this dread exuberance of woe  
 Ran naked spirits wing'd with horrid fear,  
 Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide,  
 Or heliotrope <sup>1</sup> to charm them out of view.  
 With serpents were their hands behind them bound,  
 Which through their reins infix'd the tail and head,  
 Twisted in folds before. And lo! on one  
 Near to our side, darted an adder up,  
 And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,  
 'Transpierced him. Far more quickly than e'er pen  
 Wrote O or I, he kindled, burn'd, and changed  
 To ashes all, pour'd out upon the earth.  
 When there dissolved he lay, the dust again  
 Uproll'd spontaneous, and the self-same form  
 Instant resumed. So mighty sages tell,  
 The Arabian Phœnix,<sup>2</sup> when five hundred years  
 Have well nigh circled, dies, and springs forthwith  
 Renascent: blade nor herb throughout his life

<sup>1</sup> *Heliotrope.*] Viridi colore est (gemma heliotropion) non ita acuto sed nubilo magis et represso, stellis puniceis superspersa. Causa nominis de effectu lapidis est et potestate. Dejecta in labris æneis radios solis mutat sanguineo percussu, utraque aquâ splendorem aeris abjicit et avertit. Etiam illud posse dicitur, ut herba ejusdem nominis mixta et præcantationibus legitimis consecrata, eum, a quocunque gestabitur, subtrahat visibus obviorum. Solinus, c. xl. "A stone," says Boccaccio, in his humorous tale of Calandrino, "which we lapidaries call heliotrope, of such extraordinary virtue, that the bearer of it is effectually concealed from the sight of all present." Decam. G. viii. N. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Arabian Phœnix.*] This is translated from Ovid, Metam. lib. xv.:

Una est quæ reparat, seque ipsa resemnat ales;  
 Assyrii Phœnica vocant. Nec fruge neque herbis,  
 Sed thuris lacrymis, et succo vivit amomi.  
 Hæc ubi quinque suæ complevit secula vitæ,  
 Illicis in ramis, tremulæve cacumine palmæ,  
 Unguibus et pando nidum sibi construit ore.  
 Qua simul ut casias, et nardi lenis aristas,  
 Quassaque cum fulvâ substravit cinnama myrrhâ,  
 Se super imponit, finitque in odoribus ævum.

He tastes, but tears of frankincense alone  
And odorous amomum : swaths of nard  
And myrrh his funeral shroud. As one that falls,  
He knows not how, by force demoniac dragg'd  
To earth, or through obstruction fettering up  
In chains invisible the powers of man,  
Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around,  
Bewilder'd with the monstrous agony  
He hath endured, and wildly staring sighs ;  
So stood aghast the sinner when he rose.

Oh ! how severe God's judgment, that deals out  
Such blows in stormy vengeance. Who he was,  
My teacher next inquired ; and thus in few  
He answer'd : " Vanni Fucci <sup>1</sup> am I call'd,  
Not long since rained down from Tuscany  
To this dire gullet. Me the bestial life  
And not the human pleased, mule that I was,  
Who in Pistoia found my worthy den."

I then to Virgil : " Bid him stir not hence ;  
And ask what crime did thrust him hither : once  
A man I knew him, choleric and bloody."

The sinner heard and feign'd not, but towards  
me

His mind directing and his face, wherein  
Was dismal shame depicted, thus he spake :  
" It grieves me more to have been caught by thee  
In this sad plight, which thou beholdest, than  
When I was taken from the other life.  
I have no power permitted to deny  
What thou inquirest. I am doom'd thus low  
To dwell, for that the sacristy by me  
Was rifled of its goodly ornaments,  
And with the guilt another falsely charged.  
But that thou mayst not joy to see me thus,  
So as thou e'er shalt 'scape this darksome realm,  
Open thine ears and hear what I forebode.

<sup>1</sup> *Vanni Fucci.*] He is said to have been an illegitimate offspring of the family of Lazari in Pistoia, and, having robbed the sacristy of the Church of St. James in that city, to have charged Vanni della Nona with the sacrilege ; in consequence of which accusation the latter suffered death.

Reft of the Neri first Pistoia <sup>1</sup> pines ;  
 Then Florence <sup>2</sup> changeth citizens and laws ;  
 From Valdimagra, <sup>3</sup> drawn by wrathful Mars,  
 A vapour rises, wrapt in turbid mists,  
 And sharp and eager driveth on the storm  
 With arrowy hurtling o'er Piceno's field.  
 Whence suddenly the cloud shall burst, and strike  
 Each helpless Bianco prostrate to the ground.  
 This have I told, that grief may rend thy heart."

## CANTO XXV

## ARGUMENT

The sacrilegious Fucci vents his fury in blasphemy, is seized by serpents, and flying is pursued by Cacus in the form of a Centaur, who is described with a swarm of serpents on his haunch, and a dragon on his shoulders breathing forth fire. Our Poet then meets with the spirits of three of his countrymen, two of whom undergo a marvellous transformation in his presence.

WHEN he had spoke, the sinner raised his hands <sup>4</sup>  
 Pointed in mockery, and cried : " Take them, God !

<sup>1</sup> *Pistoia*.] " In May 1301, the Bianchi party of Pistoia, with the assistance and favour of the Bianchi, who ruled Florence, drove out the party of the Neri from the former place, destroying their houses, palaces, and farms." Giov. Villani, *Hist. lib. viii. c. xlv.* <sup>2</sup> *Then Florence*.]

" Soon after the Bianchi will be expelled from Florence, the Neri will prevail, and the laws and people will be changed."

<sup>3</sup> *From Valdimagra*.] The commentators explain this prophetic threat to allude to the victory obtained by the Marquis Morello Malaspina of Valdimagra (a tract of country now called the Lunigiana), who put himself at the head of the Neri, and defeated their opponents, the Bianchi, in the Campo Piceno near Pistoia, soon after the occurrence related in the preceding note on v. 142. Of this engagement I find no mention in Villani. Balbo (*Vita di Dante, v. ii. p. 143*) refers to Gerini, *Memorie Storiche di Lunigiana, tom. ii. p. 123*, for the whole history of this Morello or Moroello. Currado Malaspina is introduced in the eighth Canto of the *Purgatorio* ; where it appears that, although on the present occasion they espoused contrary sides, most important favours were nevertheless conferred by that family on our Poet, at a subsequent period of his exile, in 1307. <sup>4</sup> *His hands*.] *Le mani alzo, con ambedue le fiche.* " The practice of thrusting out the thumb between the first and second fingers, to express the feelings of insult and contempt, has prevailed very generally among the nations of Europe, and for many ages had been denominated ' making the fig,' or



I level them at thee." From that day forth  
 The serpents were my friends ; for round his neck  
 One of them rolling twisted, as it said,  
 " Be silent, tongue ! " Another, to his arms  
 Upgliding, tied them, riveting itself  
 So close, it took from them the power to move.

Pistoia ! ah, Pistoia ! why dost doubt  
 To turn thee into ashes, cumbering earth  
 No longer, since in evil act so far  
 Thou hast outdone thy seed ? <sup>1</sup> I did not mark,  
 Through all the gloomy circles of the abyss,  
 Spirit, that swell'd so proudly 'gainst his God ;  
 Not him, <sup>2</sup> who headlong fell from Thebes. He fled,  
 Nor utter'd more ; and after him there came  
 A Centaur full of fury, shouting, " Where,  
 Where is the caitiff ? " On Maremma's marsh <sup>3</sup>  
 Swarm not the serpent tribe, as on his haunch  
 They swarm'd, to where the human face begins.  
 Behind his head, upon the shoulders, lay  
 With open wings a dragon, breathing fire  
 On whomso'er he met. To me my guide :  
 " Cacus <sup>4</sup> is this, who underneath the rock  
 Of Aventine spread oft a lake of blood.  
 He, from his brethren parted, here must tread  
 A different journey, for his fraudulent theft  
 Of the great herd that near him stall'd ; whence found  
 His felon deeds their end, beneath the mace  
 Of stout Alcides, that perchance laid on  
 A hundred blows, <sup>5</sup> and not the tenth was felt."

While yet he spake, the Centaur sped away :  
 And under us three spirits came, of whom  
 Nor I nor he was ware, till they exclaim'd,  
 " Say who are ye ! " We then brake off discourse,  
 Intent on these alone. I knew them not :

described at least by some equivalent expression." Douce's Illustrations of Shakspeare, vol. i. p. 492, ed. 1807.

<sup>1</sup> *Thy seed.*] Thy ancestry. <sup>2</sup> *Not him.*] Capaneus. Canto xiv.  
<sup>3</sup> *On Maremma's marsh.*] An extensive tract near the seashore of Tuscany. <sup>4</sup> *Cacus.*] Virg., Æn. lib. viii. 193. <sup>5</sup> *A hundred blows.*] Less than ten blows, out of the hundred Hercules gave him, had deprived him of feeling.

But, as it chanceth oft, befel, that one  
 Had need to name another. "Where," said he,  
 "Doth Cianfa<sup>1</sup> lurk?" I, for a sign my guide  
 Should stand attentive, placed against my lips  
 The finger lifted. If, O reader! now  
 Thou be not apt to credit what I tell,  
 No marvel; for myself do scarce allow  
 The witness of mine eyes. But as I look'd  
 Toward them, lo! a serpent with six feet  
 Springs forth on one, and fastens full upon him:  
 His midmost grasp'd the belly, a forefoot  
 Seized on each arm (while deep in either cheek<sup>2</sup>  
 He flesh'd his fangs); the hinder on the thighs  
 Were spread, 'twixt which the tail inserted curl'd  
 Upon the reins behind. Ivy ne'er clasp'd  
 A dodder'd oak, as round the other's limbs  
 The hideous monster intertwined his own.  
 Then, as they both had been of burning wax,  
 Each melted into other, mingling hues,  
 That which was either now was seen no more.  
 Thus up the shrinking paper ere it burns,  
 A brown tint glides, not turning yet to black,  
 And the clean white expires. The other two  
 Look'd on, exclaiming, "Ah! how dost thou change,  
 Agnello!<sup>3</sup> See? Thou art nor double now,  
 Nor only one." The two heads now became  
 One, and two figures blended in one form  
 Appear'd, where both were lost. Of the four lengths  
 Two arms were made: the belly and the chest,  
 The thighs and legs, into such members changed  
 As never eye hath seen. Of former shape  
 All trace was vanish'd. Two, yet neither, seem'd  
 That image miscreate, and so pass'd on  
 With tardy steps. As underneath the scourge

<sup>1</sup> *Cianfa.*] He is said to have been of the family of Donati at Florence. <sup>2</sup> *In either cheek.*] Ostendit mihi post hoc apostolus lacum magnum tetrum, et aquæ sulphureæ plenum, in quo animarum multitudo demersa est, plenum serpentibus ac scorpionibus; stabant vero ibi et dæmones serpentes tenentes et ora vultus et capita hominum cum eisdem serpentibus percutientes. Alberici, Visio, § 23. <sup>3</sup> *Agnello.*] Agnello Brunelleschi.

Of the fierce dog-star that lays bare the fields,  
 Shifting from brake to brake the lizard seems  
 A flash of lightning, if he thwart the road ;  
 So toward the entrails of the other two  
 Approaching seem'd an adder all on fire,  
 As the dark pepper-grain livid and swart.  
 In that part,<sup>1</sup> whence our life is nourish'd first,  
 One he transpierced ; then down before him fell  
 Stretch'd out. The pierced spirit look'd on him,  
 But spake not ; yea, stood motionless and yawn'd,  
 As if by sleep or feverous fit assail'd.  
 He eyed the serpent, and the serpent him.  
 One from the wound, the other from the mouth  
 Breathed a thick smoke, whose vapoury columns join'd.

Lucan <sup>2</sup> in mute attention now may hear,  
 Nor thy disastrous fate, Sabellus, tell,  
 Nor thine, Nasidius. Ovid <sup>3</sup> now be mute.  
 What if in warbling fiction he record  
 Cadmus and Arethusa, to a snake  
 Him changed, and her into a fountain clear,  
 I envy not ; for never face to face  
 Two natures thus transmuted did he sing,  
 Wherein both shapes were ready to assume  
 The other's substance. They in mutual guise  
 So answer'd, that the serpent split his train  
 Divided to a fork, and the pierced spirit  
 Drew close his steps together, legs and thighs  
 Compacted, that no sign of juncture soon  
 Was visible : the tail, disparted, took  
 The figure which the spirit lost ; its skin  
 Softening, his indurated to a rind.  
 The shoulders next I mark'd, that entering join'd  
 The monster's arm-pits, whose two shorter feet  
 So lengthen'd, as the others dwindling shrunk.  
 The feet behind then twisting up became  
 That part that man conceals, which in the wretch  
 Was cleft in twain. While both the shadowy smoke  
 With a new colour veils, and generates

<sup>1</sup> *In that part.*] The navel.    <sup>2</sup> *Lucan.*] Phars. lib. ix. 766 and  
 793.    <sup>3</sup> *Ovid.*] Metam. lib. iv. and v.

The excrescent pile on one, peeling it off  
 From the other body, lo ! upon his feet  
 One upright rose, and prone the other fell.  
 Nor yet their glaring and malignant lamps  
 Were shifted, though each feature changed beneath.  
 Of him who stood erect, the mounting face  
 Retreated towards the temples, and what there  
 Superfluous matter came, shot out in ears  
 From the smooth cheeks ; the rest, not backward  
 dragg'd,

Of its excess did shape the nose ; and swell'd  
 Into due size protuberant the lips.  
 He, on the earth who lay, meanwhile extends  
 His sharpen'd visage, and draws down the ears  
 Into the head, as doth the slug his horns.  
 His tongue, continuous before and apt  
 For utterance, severs ; and the other's fork  
 Closing unites. That done, the smoke was laid.  
 The soul, transform'd into the brute, glides off,  
 Hissing along the vale, and after him  
 The other talking sputters ; but soon turn'd  
 His new-grown shoulders on him, and in few  
 Thus to another spake : " Along this path  
 Crawling, as I have done, speed Buoso <sup>1</sup> now ! "  
 So saw I fluctuate in successive change  
 The unsteady ballast of the seventh hold :  
 And here if aught my pen have swerved, events  
 So strange may be its warrant. O'er mine eyes  
 Confusion hung, and on my thoughts amaze.

Yet scaped they not so covertly, but well  
 I mark'd Sciancato : <sup>2</sup> he alone it was  
 Of the three first that came, who changed not : though  
 The other's fate, Gaville ! <sup>3</sup> still dost rue.

<sup>1</sup> *Buoso*.] He is also said by some to have been of the Donati family ; but by others of the Abbati. <sup>2</sup> *Sciancato*.] Puccio Sciancato, a noted robber, whose family, Venturi says, he has not been able to discover. The Latin annotator on the Monte Cassino MS. informs us that he was one of the Galigai of Florence, the decline of which house is mentioned in the *Paradiso*, Canto xvi. 96. <sup>3</sup> *Gaville*.] Francesco Guercio Cavalcante was killed at Gaville, near Florence ; and in revenge of his death several inhabitants of that district were put to death.

## CANTO XXVI

## ARGUMENT

Remounting by the steps, down which they had descended to the seventh gulf, they go forward to the arch that stretches over the eighth, and from thence behold numberless flames wherein are punished the evil counsellors, each flame containing a sinner, save one, in which were Diomede and Ulysses, the latter of whom relates the manner of his death.

FLORENCE, exult, for thou so mightily  
Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings  
Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over hell.  
Among the plunderers, such the three <sup>1</sup> I found  
Thy citizens ; whence shame to me thy son,  
And no proud honour to thyself redounds.

But if our minds, when dreaming near the dawn,  
Are of the truth presageful, thou ere long  
Shalt feel what Prato <sup>2</sup> (not to say the rest)  
Would fain might come upon thee ; and that chance  
Were in good time, if it befel thee now.  
Would so it were, since it must needs befall !  
For as time <sup>3</sup> wears me, I shall grieve the more.

We from the depth departed ; and my guide  
Remounting scaled the flinty steps,<sup>4</sup> which late  
We downward traced, and drew me up the steep.

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note : " Tra li ladron trovai cinque cotali  
Tuoi cittadini."

" I found five of thy citizens among the thieves," not " three," as Cary has translated it. The five are Cianfa Donati, Agnello Brunelleschi, Buoso, Puccio Sciancato, and Francesco Guercio Cavalcante.

<sup>2</sup> *Shalt feel what Prato.*] The Poet prognosticates the calamities which were soon to befall his native city, and which, he says, even her nearest neighbour, Prato, would wish her. The calamities more particularly pointed at are said to be the fall of a wooden bridge over the Arno, in May 1304, where a large multitude were assembled to witness a representation of hell and the infernal torments, in consequence of which accident many lives were lost ; and a conflagration, that in the following month destroyed more than seventeen hundred houses, many of them sumptuous buildings. See G. Villani, Hist. lib. viii. c. lxx. and lxxi.

<sup>3</sup> *As time.*] " I shall feel all calamities more sensibly as I am further advanced in life." <sup>4</sup> *The flinty steps.*] Venturi, after Daniello and Volpi, explains the word in the original, " borni," to mean the stones that project from a wall, for other buildings to be joined to, which the workmen call " toothings."

Pursuing thus our solitary way  
Among the crags and splinters of the rock,  
Sped not our feet without the help of hands.

Then sorrow seized me, which e'en now revives,  
As my thought turns again to what I saw,  
And, more than I am wont, I rein and curb  
The powers of nature in me, lest they run  
Where Virtue guides not ; that, if aught of good  
My gentle star or something better gave me,  
I envy not myself the precious boon.

As in that season, when the sun least veils  
His face that lightens all, what time the fly  
Gives way to the shrill gnat, the peasant then,  
Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees  
Fire-flies innumerable spangling o'er the vale,  
Vineyard or tilth, where his day-labour lies ;  
With flames so numberless throughout its space  
Shone the eighth chasm, apparent, when the depth  
Was to my view exposed. As he, whose wrongs <sup>1</sup>  
The bears avenged, at its departure saw  
Elijah's chariot, when the steeds erect  
Raised their steep flight for heaven ; his eyes, mean-  
while,

Straining pursued them, till the flame alone,  
Upsoaring like a misty speck, he kenn'd :  
E'en thus along the gulf moves every flame,  
A sinner so enfolded close in each,  
That none exhibits token of the theft.

Upon the bridge I forward bent to look,  
And grasp'd a flinty mass, or else had fallen,  
Though push'd not from the height. The guide,  
who mark'd

How I did gaze attentive, thus began :  
" Within these ardours are the spirits, each  
Swathed in confining fire."—" Master ! thy word,"  
I answer'd, " hath assured me ; yet I deem'd  
Already of the truth, already wish'd  
To ask thee who is in yon fire, that comes  
So parted at the summit, as it seem'd

<sup>1</sup> *As he, whose wrongs.]* Kings, b. ii. c. ii.



Ascending from that funeral pile <sup>1</sup> where lay  
 The Theban brothers." He replied : " Within,  
 Ulysses there and Diomedes endure  
 Their penal tortures, thus to vengeance now  
 Together hasting, as erewhile to wrath.  
 These in the flame with ceaseless groans deplore  
 The ambush of the horse,<sup>2</sup> that open'd wide  
 A portal for that goodly seed to pass,  
 Which sow'd imperial Rome ; nor less the guile  
 Lament they, whence, of her Achilles 'reft,  
 Deïdamia yet in death complains.  
 And there is rued the stratagem that Troy  
 Of her Palladium spoil'd."—" If they have power  
 Of utterance from within these sparks," said I,  
 " O master ! think my prayer a thousand-fold  
 In repetition urged, that thou vouchsafe  
 To pause till here the horned flame arrive.  
 See, how toward it with desire I bend."

He thus : " Thy prayer is worthy of much praise,  
 And I accept it therefore ; but do thou  
 Thy tongue refrain : to question them be mine ;  
 For I divine thy wish ; and they perchance,  
 For they were Greeks, might shun discourse with thee."

When there the flame had come, where time and  
 place  
 Seem'd fitting to my guide, he thus began :  
 " O ye, who dwell two spirits in one fire !  
 If, living, I of you did merit aught,  
 Whate'er the measure were of that desert,  
 When in the world my lofty strain I pour'd,  
 Move ye not on, till one of you unfold

<sup>1</sup> *Ascending from that funeral pile.*] The flame is said to have divided on the funeral pile which consumed the bodies of Eteocles and Poly-nices, as if conscious of the enmity that actuated them while living.

Ecce iterum fratris primos ut contigit artus  
 Ignis edax, tremuere rogi, et novus advena busto  
 Pellitur, exundant diviso vertice flammæ,  
 Alternosque apices abrupta luce coruscant. Statius, *Theb.* lib. xii.  
 Compare Lucan, *Phars.* lib. i. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *The ambush of the horse.*] "The ambush of the wooden horse, that caused Æneas to quit the city of Troy and seek his fortune in Italy, where his descendants founded the Roman empire."

In what clime death o'ertook him self-destroy'd."

Of the old flame forthwith the greater horn  
 Began to roll, murmuring, as a fire  
 That labours with the wind, then to and fro  
 Wagging the top, as a tongue uttering sounds,  
 Threw out its voice, and spake: "When I escaped  
 From Circe, who beyond a circling year  
 Had held me near Caieta <sup>1</sup> by her charms,  
 Ere thus Æneas yet had named the shore;  
 Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence  
 Of my old father, nor return of love,  
 That should have crown'd Penelope with joy,  
 Could overcome in me the zeal I had  
 To explore the world, and search the ways of life,  
 Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sail'd  
 Into the deep illimitable main,  
 With but one bark, and the small faithful band  
 That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,  
 Far as Marocco, either shore I saw,  
 And the Sardinian and each isle beside  
 Which round that ocean bathes. Tardy with age  
 Were I and my companions, when we came  
 To the strait pass,<sup>2</sup> where Hercules ordain'd  
 The boundaries not to be o'erstepp'd by man.  
 The walls of Seville to my right I left,  
 On the other hand already Ceuta past.  
 'O brothers!' I began, 'who to the west.  
 'Through perils without number now have reach'd;  
 'To this the short remaining watch, that yet  
 'Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof  
 'Of the unpeopled world, following the track  
 'Of Phœbus. Call to mind from whence ye sprang:  
 'Ye were not form'd to live the life of brutes,  
 'But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'  
 With these few words I sharpen'd for the voyage  
 The mind of my associates, that I then  
 Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn  
 Our poop we turn'd, and for the witless flight

<sup>1</sup> *Caieta.*] Virg., Æn. lib. vii. 1.      <sup>2</sup> *The strait pass.*] The Straits of Gibraltar.

Made our oars wings,<sup>1</sup> still gaining on the left.  
 Each star of the other pole night now beheld,  
 And ours so low, that from the ocean floor  
 It rose not. Five times re-illumed, as oft  
 Vanish'd the light from underneath the moon,  
 Since the deep way we enter'd, when from far  
 Appear'd a mountain dim,<sup>2</sup> loftiest methought  
 Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seized us straight ;  
 But soon to mourning changed. From the new land  
 A whirlwind sprung, and at her foremost side  
 Did strike the vessel. Thrice<sup>3</sup> it whirl'd her round  
 With all the waves ; the fourth time lifted up  
 The poop, and sank the prow : so fate decreed :  
 And over us the booming billow closed." <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Made our oars wings.*]

Οὐδ' ὠήρε' ἱρετμῶ, τὰ τε πτερὰ νηυσὶ πέλονται. Hom. Od. xi. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *A mountain dim.*] The mountain of Purgatory.—Amongst the various opinions of theologians respecting the situation of the terrestrial paradise, Pietro Lombardo relates, that "it was separated by a long space, either of sea or land, from the regions inhabited by men, and placed in the ocean, reaching as far as to the lunar circle, so that the waters of the deluge did not reach it." Sent. lib. ii. dist. 17. Thus Lombardi.

<sup>3</sup> *Thrice.*]

————— Ast illum ter fluctus ibidem  
 Torquet agens circum, et rapidus vorat æquore vortex.

Virg., Æn. lib. i. 116.

<sup>4</sup> *Closed.*] Venturi refers to Pliny and Solinus for the opinion that Ulysses was the founder of Lisbon, from whence he thinks it was easy for the fancy of a poet to send him on yet further enterprises. Perhaps the story (which it is not unlikely that our author will be found to have borrowed from some legend of the Middle Ages) may have taken its rise partly from the obscure oracle returned by the ghost of Tiresias to Ulysses (see the eleventh book of the Odyssey), and partly from the fate which there was reason to suppose had befallen some adventurous explorers of the Atlantic Ocean.

## CANTO XXVII

## ARGUMENT

The Poet, treating of the same punishment as in the last Canto, relates that he turned towards a flame in which was the Count Guido da Montefeltro, whose inquiries respecting the state of Romagna he answers; and Guido is thereby induced to declare who he is, and why condemned to that torment.

Now upward rose the flame, and still'd its light  
To speak no more, and now pass'd on with leave  
From the mild poet gain'd; when following came  
Another, from whose top a sound confused,  
Forth issuing, drew our eyes that way to look.

As the Sicilian bull,<sup>1</sup> that rightfully  
His cries first echoed who had shaped its mould,  
Did so rebellow, with the voice of him  
Tormented, that the brazen monster seem'd  
Pierced through with pain; thus, while no way they  
found,

Nor avenue immediate through the flame,  
Into its language turn'd the dismal words:  
But soon as they had won their passage forth,  
Up from the point, which vibrating obey'd  
Their motion at the tongue, these sounds were heard:  
"O thou! to whom I now direct my voice,  
That lately didst exclaim in Lombard phrase,  
'Depart thou; I solicit thee no more';  
Though somewhat tardy I perchance arrive,  
Let it not irk thee here to pause awhile,  
And with me parley: lo! it irks not me,  
And yet I burn. If but e'en now thou fall  
Into this blind world, from that pleasant land  
Of Latium, whence I draw my sum of guilt,  
Tell me if those who in Romagna dwell  
Have peace or war. For of the mountains there<sup>2</sup>  
Was I, betwixt Urbino and the height  
Whence Tiber first unlocks his mighty flood."

<sup>1</sup> *The Sicilian bull.*] The engine of torture invented by Perillus, for the tyrant Phalaris.    <sup>2</sup> *Of the mountains there.*] Montefeltro.

Leaning I listen'd yet with heedful ear,  
 When, as he touch'd my side, the leader thus :  
 " Speak thou : he is a Latian." My reply  
 Was ready, and I spake without delay :  
 " O spirit ! who art hidden here below,  
 Never was thy Romagna without war  
 In her proud tyrants' bosoms, nor is now :  
 But open war there left I none. The state,  
 Ravenna hath maintain'd this many a year,  
 Is stedfast. There Polenta's eagle <sup>1</sup> broods ;  
 And in his broad circumference of plume  
 O'ershadows Cervia. The green talons grasp  
 The land,<sup>2</sup> that stood erewhile the proof so long,

<sup>1</sup> *Polenta's eagle.*] Guido Novello da Polenta, who bore an eagle for his coat of arms. The name of Polenta was derived from a castle so called, in the neighbourhood of Brittonoro. Cervia is a small maritime city, about fifteen miles to the south of Ravenna. Guido was the son of Ostasio da Polenta, and made himself master of Ravenna in 1265. In 1322 he was deprived of his sovereignty, and died at Bologna in the year following. This last and most munificent patron of Dante is himself enumerated, by the historian of Italian literature, among the poets of his time. Tiraboschi, *Storia della Lett. Ital.* tom. v. lib. iii. c. ii. sect. 13. The passage in the text might have removed the uncertainty which Tiraboschi expressed, respecting the duration of Guido's absence from Ravenna, when he was driven from that city in 1295, by the arms of Pietro, Archbishop of Monreale. It must evidently have been very short, since his government is here represented (in 1300) as not having suffered any material disturbance for many years. In the Proëmium to the Annotations on the Decameron of Boccaccio, written by those who were deputed to that work, ediz. Giunti, 1573, it is said of Guido Novello, " del quale si leggono ancora alcune composizioni, per poche che elle sieno, secondo quella età, belle e leggiadre " : and in the collection edited by Allacci at Naples, 1661, p. 382, is a sonnet of his, which breathes a high and pure spirit of Platonism. Among the MSS. of the Iliad in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, described by Mai, there is one that was in the possession of Guido. Iliadis Fragmenta, &c., fol. Mediol. 1819. Proëmium, p. xlviii. It was, perhaps, seen by Dante. To this account I must now subjoin that which has since been given, but without any reference to authorities, by Troya : " In the course of eight years, from 1310 to 1318, Guido iii. of Polenta, father of Francesca, together with his sons Bernardino and Ostasio, had died. A third son, named Bannino, was father of Guido iv. Of these two it is not known whether they held the lordship of Ravenna. But it came to the sons of Ostasio, Guido v. called Novello, and Rinaldo the archbishop : on the sons of Bernardino devolved the sovereignty of the neighbouring city of Cervia." Veltro Allegorico di Dante, ed. 1826, p. 176. <sup>2</sup> *The land.*] The territory of Forlì, the inhabitants of which, in 1282, were enabled, by the stratagem of Guido da Montefeltro, who then governed it,

And piled in bloody heap the host of France.

"The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young,<sup>1</sup>  
That tore Montagna<sup>2</sup> in their wrath, still make,  
Where they are wont, an augre of their fangs.

"Lamone's city, and Santerno's,<sup>3</sup> range  
Under the lion of the snowy lair,<sup>4</sup>  
Inconstant partisan, that changeth sides,  
Or ever summer yields to winter's frost.  
And she, whose flank is wash'd of Savio's wave,<sup>5</sup>  
As 'twixt the level and the steep she lies,  
Lives so 'twixt tyrant power and liberty.

"Now tell us, I entreat thee, who art thou :  
Be not more hard than others. In the world,  
So may thy name still rear its forehead high."  
Then roar'd awhile the fire, its sharpen'd point  
On either side waved, and thus breathed at last :  
"If I did think my answer were to one  
Who ever could return unto the world,  
This flame should rest unshaken. But since ne'er,  
If true be told me, any from this depth  
Has found his upward way, I answer thee,  
Nor fear lest infamy record the words.

"A man of arms<sup>6</sup> at first, I clothed me then  
In good Saint Francis' girdle, hoping so  
To have made amends. And certainly my hope

to defeat with great slaughter the French army by which it had been besieged. See G. Villani, lib. vii. c. lxxx. The Poet informs Guido, its former ruler, that it is now in the possession of Sinibaldo Ordolaffi, or Ardelaffi, whom he designates by his coat of arms, a lion vert.

<sup>1</sup> *The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young.*] Malatesta and Malatestino his son, lords of Rimini, called, from their ferocity, the mastiffs of Verruchio, which was the name of their castle. Malatestino was, perhaps, the husband of Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta. See notes to Canto v. 113. <sup>2</sup> *Montagna.*] Montagna de' Parcitati, a noble knight, and leader of the Ghibelline party at Rimini, murdered by Malatestino. <sup>3</sup> *Lamone's city and Santerno's.*] Lamone is the river at Faenza, and Santerno at Imola. <sup>4</sup> *The lion of the snowy lair.*] Machinardo Pagano, whose arms were a lion azure on a field argent; mentioned again in the Purgatorio, Canto xiv. 122. See G. Villani, *passim*, where he is called Machinardo da Susinana. <sup>5</sup> *Whose flank is wash'd of Savio's wave.*] Cesena, situated at the foot of a mountain, and washed by the river Savio, that often descends with a swoln and rapid stream from the Apennines.

<sup>6</sup> *A man of arms.*] Guido da Montefeltro.



Had fail'd not, but that he, whom curses light on,  
 The high priest,<sup>1</sup> again seduced me into sin.  
 And how, and wherefore, listen while I tell.  
 Long as this spirit moved the bones and pulp  
 My mother gave me, less my deeds bespake  
 The nature of the lion than the fox.  
 All ways of winding subtlety I knew,  
 And with such art conducted, that the sound  
 Reach'd the world's limit. Soon as to that part  
 Of life I found me come, when each behoves  
 To lower sails and gather in the lines ;  
 That, which before had pleased me, then I rued,  
 And to repentance and confession turn'd,  
 Wretch that I was ; and well it had bested me.  
 The chief of the new Pharisees <sup>2</sup> meantime,  
 Waging his warfare near the Lateran,  
 Not with the Saracens or Jews (his foes  
 All Christians were, nor against Acre one  
 Had fought,<sup>3</sup> nor traffick'd in the Soldan's land),  
 He, his great charge nor sacred ministry,

<sup>1</sup> *The high priest.*] Boniface VIII. <sup>2</sup> *The chief of the new Pharisees.*] Boniface VIII., whose enmity to the family of Colonna prompted him to destroy their houses near the Lateran. Wishing to obtain possession of their other seat, Penestrino, he consulted with Guido da Montefeltro how he might accomplish his purpose, offering him at the same time absolution for his past sins, as well as for that which he was then tempting him to commit. Guido's advice was, that kind words and fair promises would put his enemies into his power ; and they accordingly soon afterwards fell into the snare laid for them, A.D. 1298. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. xxiii. There is a relation similar to this in the history of Ferreto Vincentino, lib. ii. anno 1294 ; and the writer adds, that our Poet had justly condemned Guido to the torments he has allotted him. See Muratori, Script. Ital. tom. ix. p. 970, where the Editor observes : " Probosi hujus facinoris narrationi fidem adjungere nemo probus velit, quod facile confinxerint Bonifacii æmuli, &c." And indeed it would seem as if Dante himself had either not heard, or had not believed, the report of Guido's having sold himself thus foolishly to the Pope, when he wrote the passage in the Convito, where he speaks of him as one of those noble spirits, " who, when they approached the last haven, lowered the sails of their worldly operations, and gave themselves up to religion in their old age, laying aside every worldly delight and wish."

<sup>3</sup> ———— *Nor against Acre one*  
*Had fought.*] He alludes to the renegade Christians, by whom the Saracens, in April 1291, were assisted to recover St. John d'Acre, the last possession of the Christians in the Holy Land.

In himself revered, nor in me that cord  
 Which used to mark with leanness whom it girded.  
 As in Soracte, Constantine besought,  
 To cure his leprosy, Sylvester's aid ;  
 So me, to cure the fever of his pride,  
 This man besought : my counsel to that end  
 He ask'd ; and I was silent ; for his words  
 Seem'd drunken : but forthwith he thus resumed :  
 ' From thy heart banish fear : of all offence  
 ' I hitherto absolve thee. In return,  
 ' Teach me my purpose so to execute,  
 ' That Penestrino cumber earth no more.  
 ' Heaven, as thou knowest, I have power to shut  
 ' And open : and the keys are therefore twain,  
 ' The which my predecessor <sup>1</sup> meanly prized.'

" Then, yielding to the forceful arguments,  
 Of silence as more perilous I deem'd,  
 And answer'd : ' Father ! since thou washest me  
 ' Clear of that guilt wherein I now must fall,  
 ' Large promise with performance scant, be sure,  
 ' Shall make thee triumph in thy lofty seat.'

" When I was number'd with the dead, then came  
 Saint Francis for me ; but a cherub dark  
 He met, who cried, ' Wrong me not ; he is mine,  
 ' And must below to join the wretched crew,  
 ' For the deceitful counsel which he gave.  
 ' E'er since I watch'd him, hovering at his hair.  
 ' No power can the impenitent absolve ;  
 ' Nor to repent, and will, at once consist,  
 ' By contradiction absolute forbid.'

Oh misery ! how I shook myself, when he  
 Seized me, and cried, ' Thou haply thought'st me not  
 ' A disputant in logic so exact !'

To Minos down he bore me ; and the judge  
 Twined eight times round his callous back the tail,  
 Which biting with excess of rage, he spake :

' This is a guilty soul, that in the fire  
 ' Must vanish.' Hence, perdition-doom'd, I rove  
 A prey to rankling sorrow, in this garb."

<sup>1</sup> *My predecessor.* Celestine v. See notes to Canto iii.

When he had thus fulfill'd his words, the flame  
 In dolour parted, beating to and fro,  
 And writhing its sharp horn. We onward went,  
 I and my leader, up along the rock,  
 Far as another arch, that overhangs  
 The foss, wherein the penalty is paid  
 Of those who load them with committed sin.

## CANTO XXVIII

## ARGUMENT

They arrive in the ninth gulf, where the sowers of scandal, schismatics, and heretics, are seen with their limbs miserably maimed or divided in different ways. Among these the Poet finds Mahomet, Piero da Medicina, Curio, Mosca, and Bertrand de Born.

Who, e'en in words unfetter'd, might at full  
 Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,  
 Though he repeated oft the tale? No tongue  
 So vast a theme could equal, speech and thought  
 Both impotent alike. If in one band  
 Collected, stood the people all, who e'er  
 Pour'd on Apulia's happy soil <sup>1</sup> their blood,  
 Slain by the Trojans, <sup>2</sup> and in that long war, <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Happy soil.*] There is a strange discordance here among the expounders. "Fortunata terra." Because of the vicissitudes of fortune which it experienced: Landino. Fortunate, with respect to those who conquered in it: Vellutello. Or on account of its natural fertility: Venturi. The context requires that we should understand, by "fortunata," "calamitous," "disgraziata," to which sense the word is extended in the Vocabulary of La Crusca: Lombardi. Volpi is silent. On this note Archdeacon Fisher favoured me with the following remark: "Volpi is, indeed, silent at the passage; but in the article "Puglia," in his second Index, he writes, Dante la chiama fortunata, cioè pingue e feconda. This is your own translation; and is the same word in meaning with *μακάριον* and *felix*, in Xenophon's *Anabasis* and Horace, *passim*." <sup>2</sup> *The Trojans.*] Some MSS. have "Romani"; and Lombardi has admitted it into the text. Venturi had, indeed, before met with the same reading in some edition, but he has not told us in which. <sup>3</sup> *In that long war.*] The war of Hannibal in Italy. "When Mago brought news of his victories to Carthage, in order to make his successes more easily credited, he commanded the golden rings to be poured out in the senate-house, which made so large a heap, that, as some relate, they filled three *modii* and a

When of the rings the measured booty made  
 A pile so high, as Rome's historian writes  
 Who errs not ; with the multitude, that felt  
 The griding force of Guiscard's Norman steel,<sup>1</sup>  
 And those the rest,<sup>2</sup> whose bones are gather'd yet  
 At Ceperano, there where treachery  
 Branded the Apulian name, or where beyond  
 Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo,<sup>3</sup> without arms  
 The old Alardo conquer'd ; and his limbs  
 One were to show transpierced, another his  
 Clean lopt away ; a spectacle like this  
 Were but a thing of nought, to the hideous sight  
 Of the ninth chasm. A rundlet, that hath lost  
 Its middle or side stave, gapes not so wide  
 As one I mark'd, torn from the chin throughout  
 Down to the hinder passage : 'twixt the legs  
 Dangling his entrails hung, the midriff lay  
 Open to view, and wretched ventricle,  
 That turns the englutted aliment to dross.

Whilst eagerly I fix on him my gaze,  
 He eyed me, with his hands laid his breast bare,  
 And cried, " Now mark how I do rip me : lo !  
 How is Mohammed mangled : before me  
 Walks Ali <sup>4</sup> weeping, from the chin his face  
 Cleft to the forelock ; and the others all,  
 Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did sow  
 Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent.  
 A fiend is here behind, who with his sword  
 Hacks us thus cruelly, slivering again  
 Each of this ream, when we have compast round  
 The dismal way ; for first our gashes close

half. A more probable account represents them not to have exceeded one *modius*." Livy, Hist. lib. xxiii. 12.

<sup>1</sup> *Guiscard's Norman steel.*] Robert Guiscard, who conquered the kingdom of Naples, and died in 1100. G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. xviii. He is introduced in the Paradiso, Canto xviii. <sup>2</sup> *And those the rest.*] The army of Manfredi, which, through the treachery of the Apulian troops, was overcome by Charles of Anjou in 1265, and fell in such numbers, that the bones of the slain were still gathered near Ceperano. G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. ix. See the Purgatorio, Canto iii. <sup>3</sup> *Tagliacozzo.*] He alludes to the victory which Charles gained over Conradino, by the sage advice of the Sieur de Valeri, in 1268. G. Villani, lib. vii. c. xxvii. <sup>4</sup> *Ali.*] The disciple of Mohammed.

Ere we repass before him. But, say who  
 Art thou, that standest musing on the rock,  
 Haply so lingering to delay the pain  
 Sentenced upon thy crimes."—"Him death not yet,"  
 My guide rejoin'd, "hath overta'en, nor sin  
 Conducts to torment; but, that he may make  
 Full trial of your state, I who am dead  
 Must through the depths of hell, from orb to orb,  
 Conduct him. Trust my words; for they are true."

More than a hundred spirits, when that they heard,  
 Stood in the foss to mark me, through amaze  
 Forgetful of their pangs. "Thou, who perchance  
 Shalt shortly view the sun, this warning thou  
 Bear to Dolcino: <sup>1</sup> bid him, if he wish not  
 Here soon to follow me, that with good store  
 Of food he arm him, lest imprisoning snows  
 Yield him a victim to Novara's power;  
 No easy conquest else": with foot upraised  
 For stepping, spake Mohammed, on the ground  
 Then fix'd it to depart. Another shade,  
 Pierced in the throat, his nostrils mutilate  
 E'en from beneath the eyebrows, and one ear  
 Lopt off, who, with the rest, through wonder stood  
 Gazing, before the rest advanced, and bared  
 His wind-pipe, that without was all o'ersmear'd

<sup>1</sup> *Dolcino*.] "In 1305, a friar, called Dolcino, who belonged to no regular order, contrived to raise in Novara, in Lombardy, a large company of the meaner sort of people, declaring himself to be a true apostle of Christ, and promulgating a community of property and of wives, with many other such heretical doctrines. He blamed the pope, cardinals, and other prelates of the holy church, for not observing their duty, nor leading the angelic life, and affirmed that he ought to be pope. He was followed by more than three thousand men and women, who lived promiscuously on the mountains together, like beasts, and, when they wanted provisions, supplied themselves by depredation and rapine. This lasted for two years, till many, being struck with compunction at the dissolute life they led, his sect was much diminished; and, through failure of food and the severity of the snows, he was taken by the people of Novara, and burnt, with Margarita, his companion, and many other men and women whom his errors had seduced." G. Villani, lib. viii. c. lxxxiv. Landino observes, that he was possessed of singular eloquence, and that both he and Margarita endured their fate with a firmness worthy of a better cause. For a further account of him, see Muratori, *Rer. Ital. Script.* tom. ix. p. 427.

With crimson stain. "O thou!" said he, "whom sin  
 Condemns not, and whom erst (unless too near  
 Resemblance do deceive me) I aloft  
 Have seen on Latian ground, call thou to mind  
 Piero of Medicina,<sup>1</sup> if again  
 Returning, thou behold'st the pleasant land<sup>2</sup>  
 That from Vercelli slopes to Mercabò;  
 And there instruct the twain,<sup>3</sup> whom Fano boasts  
 Her worthiest sons, Guido and Angelo,  
 That if 'tis given us here to scan aright  
 The future, they out of life's tenement<sup>4</sup>  
 Shall be cast forth, and whelm'd under the waves  
 Near to Cattolica, through perfidy  
 Of a fell tyrant. 'Twixt the Cyprian isle  
 And Balearic, ne'er hath Neptune seen  
 An injury so foul, by pirates done,  
 Or Argive crew of old. That one-eyed traitor  
 (Whose realm, there is a spirit here were fain  
 His eye had still lack'd sight of) them shall bring  
 To conference with him, then so shape his end,  
 That they shall need not 'gainst Focara's wind<sup>5</sup>  
 Offer up vow nor prayer." I answering thus:  
 "Declare, as thou dost wish that I above  
 May carry tidings of thee, who is he,  
 In whom that sight doth wake such sad remembrance."  
 Forthwith he laid his hand on the cheek-bone  
 Of one, his fellow-spirit, and his jaws  
 Expanding, cried: "Lo! this is he I wot of:

<sup>1</sup> *Medicina.*] A place in the territory of Bologna. Piero fomented dissensions among the inhabitants of that city, and among the leaders of the neighbouring states. <sup>2</sup> *The pleasant land.*] Lombardy.

<sup>3</sup> *The twain.*] Guido del Cassero and Angiolello da Cagnano, two of the worthiest and most distinguished citizens of Fano, were invited by Malatestino da Rimini to an entertainment, on pretence that he had some important business to transact with them; and, according to instructions given by him, they were drowned in their passage near Cattolica, between Rimini and Fano. <sup>4</sup> *Out of life's tenement.*]

"Fuor di lor vasello," is construed by the old Latin annotator on the Monte Cassino MS. and by Lombardi, "out of the ship." Volpi understands "vasello" to mean "their city or country." Others take the word in the sense according to which, though not without some doubt, it is rendered in this translation. <sup>5</sup> *Focara's wind.*] Focara is a mountain, from which a wind blows that is peculiarly dangerous to the navigators of that coast.



He speaks not for himself: the outcast this,  
 Who overwhelm'd the doubt in Cæsar's mind,<sup>1</sup>  
 Affirming that delay to men prepared,  
 Was ever harmful." Oh! how terrified  
 Methought was Curio, from whose throat was cut  
 The tongue, which spake that hardy word. Then  
 one,

Maim'd of each hand, uplifted in the gloom  
 The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots  
 Sullied his face, and cried; "Remember thee  
 Of Mosca<sup>2</sup> too; I who, alas! exclaim'd,  
 'The deed once done, there is an end,' that proved  
 A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."

I added: "Ay, and death to thine own tribe."

Whence, heaping woe on woe, he hurried off,  
 As one grief-stung to madness. But I there  
 Still linger'd to behold the troop, and saw  
 Things, such as I may fear without more proof  
 To tell of, but that conscience makes me firm,  
 The boon companion, who her strong breastplate  
 Buckles on him, that feels no guilt within,  
 And bids him on and fear not. Without doubt  
 I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,  
 A headless trunk, that even as the rest  
 Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair  
 It bore the sever'd member, lantern wise

<sup>1</sup> *The doubt in Cæsar's mind.*] Curio, whose speech (according to Lucan) determined Julius Cæsar to proceed when he had arrived at Rimini (the ancient Ariminum), and doubted whether he should prosecute the civil war:

Tolle moras: semper nocuit differe paratis. Phars. l. i. 281.

Haste then thy towering eagles on their way;

When fair occasion calls, 'tis fatal to delay. Rowe.

<sup>2</sup> *Mosca.*] Buondelmonte was engaged to marry a lady of the Amidei family, but broke his promise, and united himself to one of the Donati. This was so much resented by the former, that a meeting of themselves and their kinsmen was held, to consider of the best means of revenging the insult. Mosca degli Uberti, or de' Lamberti, persuaded them to resolve on the assassination of Buondelmonte, exclaiming to them, "the thing once done, there is an end." The counsel and its effects were the source of many terrible calamities to the state of Florence. "This murder," says G. Villani, lib. v. cap. xxxviii., "was the cause and beginning of the accursed Guelph and Ghibelline parties in Florence." It happened in 1215. See the Paradiso, Canto xvi. 139.

Pendent in hand, which look'd at us, and said,  
 "Woe's me!" The spirit lighted thus himself;  
 And two there were in one, and one in two.  
 How that may be, he knows who ordereth so.

When at the bridge's foot direct he stood,  
 His arm aloft he rear'd, thrusting the head  
 Full in our view, that nearer we might hear  
 The words, which thus it utter'd: "Now behold  
 This grievous torment, thou, who breathing go'st  
 To spy the dead: behold, if any else  
 Be terrible as this. And, that on earth  
 Thou mayst bear tidings of me, know that I  
 Am Bertrand,<sup>1</sup> he of Born, who gave King John  
 The counsel mischievous. Father and son  
 I set at mutual war. For Absalom  
 And David more did not Ahitophel,  
 Spurring them on maliciously to strife.  
 For parting those so closely knit, my brain  
 Parted, alas! I carry from its source,  
 That in this trunk inhabits. Thus the law  
 Of retribution fiercely works in me."

<sup>1</sup> *Bertrand.*] Bertrand de Born, Vicomte de Hautefort, near Perigueux in Guienne, who incited John to rebel against his father, Henry II. of England. Bertrand holds a distinguished place among the Provençal poets. He is quoted in Dante, *de Vulg. Eloq. lib. ii. cap. 2*, where it is said, "that he treated of war, which no Italian poet had yet done." "*Arma vero nullum Italum adhuc poetasse invenio.*" For the translation of some extracts from Bertrand de Born's poems, see Millot, *Hist. Littéraire des Troubadours*, tom. i. p. 210; but the historical parts of that work are, I believe, not to be relied on. Bertrand had a son of the same name, who wrote a poem against John, King of England. It is that species of composition called the *serventese*; and is in the Vatican, a MS. in Cod. 3204.

## CANTO XXIX

## ARGUMENT

Dante, at the desire of Virgil, proceeds onward to the bridge that crosses the tenth gulf, from whence he hears the cries of the alchemists and forgers, who are tormented therein; but not being able to discern anything on account of the darkness, they descend the rock, that bounds this the last of the compartments in which the eighth circle is divided, and then behold the spirits who are afflicted by divers plagues and diseases. Two of them, namely, Grifolino of Arezzo and Capocchio of Siena, are introduced speaking.

So were mine eyes inebriate with the view  
Of the vast multitude, whom various wounds  
Disfigured, that they long'd to stay and weep.

But Virgil roused me: "What yet gazest on?  
Wherefore doth fasten yet thy sight below  
Among the maim'd and miserable shades?  
Thou hast not shown in any chasm beside  
This weakness. Know, if thou wouldst number them,  
That two and twenty miles the valley winds  
Its circuit, and already is the moon  
Beneath our feet: the time permitted now  
Is short; and more, not seen, remains to see."

"If thou," I straight replied, "hadst weigh'd the  
cause,

For which I look'd, thou hadst perchance excused  
The tarrying still." My leader part pursued  
His way, the while I follow'd, answering him,  
And adding thus: "Within that cave I deem,  
Whereon so fixedly I held my ken,  
There is a spirit dwells, one of my blood,  
Wailing the crime that costs him now so dear."

Then spake my master: "Let thy soul no more  
Afflict itself for him. Direct elsewhere  
Its thought, and leave him. At the bridge's foot  
I mark'd how he did point with menacing look  
At thee, and heard him by the others named  
Geri of Bello.<sup>1</sup> Thou so wholly then

<sup>1</sup> *Geri of Bello.*] A kinsman of the Poet's, who was murdered by one of the Sacchetti family. His being placed here, may be considered

Wert busied with his spirit, who once ruled  
 The towers of Hautefort, that thou lookedst not  
 That way, ere he was gone."—"O guide beloved!  
 His violent death yet unavenged," said I,  
 "By any, who are partners in his shame,  
 Made him contemptuous; therefore, as I think,  
 He pass'd me speechless by; and, doing so,  
 Hath made me more compassionate his fate."

So we discoursed to where the rock first show'd  
 The other valley, had more light been there,  
 E'en to the lowest depth. Soon as we came  
 O'er the last cloister in the dismal rounds  
 Of Malebolge, and the brotherhood  
 Were to our view exposed, then many a dart  
 Of sore lament assail'd me, headed all  
 With points of thrilling pity, that I closed  
 Both ears against the volley with mine hands.

As were the torment, if each lazar-house  
 Of Valdichiana,<sup>1</sup> in the sultry time  
 'Twixt July and September, with the isle  
 Sardinia and Maremma's pestilent fen,<sup>2</sup>  
 Had heap'd their maladies all in one foss  
 Together; such was here the torment: dire  
 The stench, as issuing steams from fester'd limbs.

We on the utmost shore of the long rock  
 Descended still to leftward. Then my sight  
 Was livelier to explore the depth, wherein  
 The minister of the most mighty Lord,  
 All-searching Justice, dooms to punishment  
 The forgers noted on her dread record.

More rueful was it not methinks to see

as a proof that Dante was more impartial in the allotment of his punishments than has generally been supposed. He was the son of Bello, who was brother to Bellincione, our Poet's grandfather. Pelli, *Mem. per la Vita di Dante*. Opere di Dante. Zatta ediz. tom. iv. part ii. p. 23.

<sup>1</sup> *Of Valdichiana.*] The valley through which passes the river Chiana, bounded by Arezzo, Cortona, Montepulciano, and Chiusi. In the heat of autumn it was formerly rendered unwholesome by the stagnation of the water, but has since been drained by the Emperor Leopold II. The Chiana is mentioned as a remarkably sluggish stream, in the *Paradiso*, Canto xiii. 21. <sup>2</sup> *Maremma's pestilent fen.*] See note to Canto xxv. v. 18.

The nation in Ægina <sup>1</sup> droop, what time  
Each living thing, e'en to the little worm,  
All fell, so full of malice was the air,  
(And afterward, as bards of yore have told,  
The ancient people were restored anew  
From seed of emmets), than was here to see  
The spirits, that languish'd through the murky vale,  
Up-piled on many a stack. Confused they lay,  
One o'er the belly, o'er the shoulders one  
Roll'd of another; sideling crawl'd a third  
Along the dismal pathway. Step by step  
We journey'd on, in silence looking round,  
And listening those diseased, who strove in vain  
To lift their forms. Then two I mark'd, that sat  
Propt 'gainst each other, as two brazen pans  
Set to retain the heat. From head to foot,  
A tetter bark'd them round. Nor saw I e'er  
Groom currying so fast, for whom his lord  
Impatient waited, or himself perchance  
Tired with long watching, as of these each one  
Plied quickly his keen nails, through furiousness  
Of ne'er abated pruriency. The crust  
Came drawn from underneath in flakes, like scales  
Scraped from the bream, or fish of broader mail.

"O thou! who with thy fingers rendest off  
Thy coat of proof," thus spake my guide to one,  
"And sometimes rakest tearing pincers of them,  
Tell me if any born of Latian land  
Be among these within: so may thy nails  
Serve thee for everlasting to this toil."

"Both are of Latium," weeping he replied,  
"Whom tortured thus thou seest: but who art thou  
That hast inquired of us?" To whom my guide:  
"One that descend with this man, who yet lives,  
From rock to rock, and show him hell's abyss."

Then started they asunder, and each turn'd  
Trembling toward us, with the rest, whose ear  
Those words redounding struck. To me my liege

<sup>1</sup> *In Ægina.*] He alludes to the fable of the ants changed into myrmidons. Ovid, *Metam. lib. vii.*

Address'd him: "Speak to them whate'er thou list."

And I therewith began: "So may no time  
Filch your remembrance from the thoughts of men  
In the upper world, but after many suns  
Survive it, as ye tell me, who ye are,  
And of what race ye come. Your punishment,  
Unseemly and disgustful in its kind,  
Deter you not from opening thus much to me."

"Arezzo was my dwelling,"<sup>1</sup> answer'd one,  
"And me Albero of Siena brought  
To die by fire: but that, for which I died,  
Leads me not here. True is, in sport I told him,  
That I had learn'd to wing my flight in air;  
And he, admiring much, as he was void  
Of wisdom, will'd me to declare to him  
The secret of mine art: and only hence,  
Because I made him not a Dædalus,  
Prevail'd on one supposed his sire to burn me.  
But Minos to this chasm, last of the ten,  
For that I practised alchemy on earth,  
Has doom'd me. Him no subterfuge eludes."

Then to the bard I spake: "Was ever race  
Light as Siena's? Sure not France herself  
Can show a tribe so frivolous and vain."

The other leprous spirit heard my words,  
And thus return'd: "Be Stricca<sup>2</sup> from this charge

<sup>1</sup> *Arezzo was my dwelling.*] Grifolino of Arezzo, who promised Albero, son of the Bishop of Siena, that he would teach him the art of flying; and, because he did not keep his promise, Albero prevailed on his father to have him burnt for a necromancer. <sup>2</sup> *Stricca.*] This is said ironically. Stricca, Niccolo Salimbeni, Caccia of Asciano, and Abbagliato or Meo de' Folcacchieri, belonged to a company of prodigal and luxurious young men in Siena, called the "brigata godereccia." Niccolo was the inventor of a new manner of using cloves in cookery, not very well understood by the commentators, and which was termed the "costuma ricca." Pagliarini, in his *Historical Observations on the Quadriregio*, lib. iii. cap. 13, adduces a passage from a MS. History of Siena, in which it is told that these spendthrifts, out of the sum raised from the sale of their estates, built a palace, which they inhabited in common, and made the receptacle of their apparatus for luxurious enjoyment; and that, amongst their other extravagancies, they had their horses shod with silver, and forbade their servants to pick up the precious shoes if they dropped off. The end was, as might be expected, extreme poverty and wretchedness. Landino says, they spent two hundred thousand florins in twenty months.



Exempted, he who knew so temperately  
 To lay out fortune's gifts ; and Niccolo,  
 Who first the spice's costly luxury  
 Discover'd in that garden,<sup>1</sup> where such seed  
 Roots deepest in the soil : and be that troop  
 Exempted, with whom Caccia of Asciano  
 Lavish'd his vineyards and wide-spreading woods,  
 And his rare wisdom Abbagliato <sup>2</sup> show'd  
 A spectacle for all. That thou mayst know  
 Who seconds thee against the Sienese  
 Thus gladly, bend this way thy sharpen'd sight,  
 That well my face may answer to thy ken ;  
 So shalt thou see I am Capocchio's ghost,<sup>3</sup>  
 Who forged transmuted metals by the power  
 Of alchemy ; and if I scan thee right,  
 Thou needs must well remember how I aped  
 Creative nature by my subtle art."

## CANTO XXX

## ARGUMENT

In the same gulf, other kinds of impostors, as those who have counterfeited the persons of others, or debased the current coin, or deceived by speech under false pretences, are described as suffering various diseases. Sinon of Troy and Adamo of Brescia mutually reproach each other with their several impostures.

WHAT time resentment burn'd in Juno's breast  
 For Semele against the Theban blood,

<sup>1</sup> *In that garden.*] Siena. <sup>2</sup> *Abbagliato.*] Lombardi understands "Abbagliato" not to be the name of a man, but to be the epithet to "senno," and construes "E l'abbagliato suo senno proferse," "and manifested to the world the blindness of their understanding." So little doubt, however, is made of there being such a person, that Allacci speaks of his grandfather Folcacchiero de' Folcacchieri of Siena, as one who may dispute with the Sicilians the praise of being the first inventor of Italian poetry. Tiraboschi, indeed, observes, that this genealogy is not authenticated by Allacci ; yet it is difficult to suppose that he should have mentioned it at all, if Meo de' Folcacchieri, or Abbagliato, as he was called, had never existed. Vol. i. p. 95. Mathias's edit. <sup>3</sup> *Capocchio's ghost.*] Capocchio of Siena, who is said to have been a fellow-student of Dante's, in natural philosophy.

As more than once in dire mischance was rued;  
 Such fatal frenzy seized on Athamas,<sup>1</sup>  
 That he his spouse beholding with a babe  
 Laden on either arm, "Spread out," he cried,  
 "The meshes, that I take the lioness  
 And the young lions at the pass": then forth  
 Stretch'd he his merciless talons, grasping one,  
 One helpless innocent, Learchus named,  
 Whom swinging down he dash'd upon a rock;  
 And with her other burden,<sup>2</sup> self-destroy'd,  
 The hapless mother plunged. And when the pride  
 Of all presuming Troy fell from its height,  
 By fortune overwhelm'd, and the old king  
 With his realm perish'd; then did Hecuba,<sup>3</sup>  
 A wretch forlorn and captive, when she saw  
 Polyxena first slaughter'd, and her son,  
 Her Polydorus,<sup>4</sup> on the wild sea-beach  
 Next met the mourner's view, then reft of sense  
 Did she run barking even as a dog;  
 Such mighty power had grief to wrench her soul.  
 But ne'er the Furies, or of Thebes, or Troy,  
 With such fell cruelty were seen, their goads  
 Infixing in the limbs of man or beast,  
 As now two pale and naked ghosts I saw,  
 That gnarling wildly scamper'd, like the swine  
 Excluded from his sty. One reach'd Capocchio,  
 And in the neck-joint sticking deep his fangs,  
 Dragg'd him, that, o'er the solid pavement rubb'd  
 His belly stretch'd out prone. The other shape,  
 He of Arezzo, there left trembling, spake:  
 "That sprite of air is Schicchi;<sup>5</sup> in like mood

<sup>1</sup> *Athamas.*] From Ovid, *Metam.* lib. iv. Protinus, Æolides, &c.

<sup>2</sup> *With her other burden.*]

Seque super pontum nullo tardata timore

Mittit, onusque suum.

Ovid, *Metam.* lib. iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Hecuba.*] See Euripides, *Hecuba*; and Ovid, *Metam.* lib. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> *Her Polydorus.*]

Aspicit ejectum Polidori in littore corpus. Ovid, *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Schicchi.*] Gianni Schicchi, who was of the family of Cavalcanti, possessed such a faculty of moulding his features to the resemblance of others, that he was employed by Simon Donati to personate Buoso Donati, then recently deceased, and to make a will, leaving Simon

Of random mischief vents he still his spite."

To whom I answering: "Oh! as thou dost hope  
The other may not flesh its jaws on thee,  
Be patient to inform us, who it is,  
Ere it speed hence.—" That is the ancient soul  
Of wretched Myrrha," <sup>1</sup> he replied, "who burn'd  
With most unholy flame for her own sire,  
And a false shape assuming, so perform'd  
The deed of sin; e'en as the other there,  
That onward passes, dared to counterfeit  
Donati's features, to feign'd testament  
The seal affixing, that himself might gain,  
For his own share, the lady of the herd."

When vanish'd the two furious shades, on whom  
Mine eye was held, I turn'd it back to view  
The other cursed spirits. One I saw  
In fashion like a lute, had but the groin  
Been sever'd where it meets the forked part.  
Swoln dropsy, disproportioning the limbs  
With ill-converted moisture, that the paunch  
Suits not the visage, open'd wide his lips  
Gasping as in the hectic man for drought,  
One towards the chin, the other upward curl'd.

"O ye! who in this world of misery,  
Wherefore I know not, are exempt from pain,"  
Thus he began, "attentively regard  
Adamo's woe.<sup>2</sup> When living, full supply  
Ne'er lack'd me of what most I coveted;  
One drop of water now, alas! I crave.  
The rills, that glitter down the grassy slopes  
Of Casentino,<sup>3</sup> making fresh and soft  
The banks whereby they glide to Arno's stream,  
Stand ever in my view; and not in vain;

his heir; for which service he was remunerated with a mare of extraordinary value, here called "the lady of the herd."

<sup>1</sup> *Myrrha*.] See Ovid, *Metam.* lib. x. <sup>2</sup> *Adamo's woe*.] Adamo of Brescia, at the instigation of Guido, Alessandro, and their brother Aghinulfo, lords of Romena, counterfeited the coin of Florence; for which crime he was burnt. Landino says, that in his time the peasants still pointed out a pile of stones near Romena, as the place of his execution. See Troya, *Veltro Allegorico*, p. 25. <sup>3</sup> *Casentino*.] Romena is a part of Casentino.

For more the pictured semblance dries me up,  
 Much more than the disease, which makes the flesh  
 Desert these shrivel'd cheeks. So from the place,  
 Where I transgress'd, stern justice urging me,  
 Takes means to quicken more my labouring sighs.  
 There is Romena, where I falsified  
 The metal with the Baptist's form imprest,  
 For which on earth I left my body burnt.  
 But if I here might see the sorrowing soul  
 Of Guido, Alessandro, or their brother,  
 For Branda's limpid spring <sup>1</sup> I would not change  
 The welcome sight. One is e'en now within,  
 If truly the mad spirits tell, that round  
 Are wandering. But wherein besteads me that ?  
 My limbs are fetter'd. Were I but so light,  
 That I each hundred years might move one inch,  
 I had set forth already on this path,  
 Seeking him out amidst the shapeless crew,  
 Although eleven miles it wind, not less <sup>2</sup>  
 Than half of one across. They brought me down  
 Among this tribe ; induced by them, I stamp'd  
 The florens with three carats of alloy." <sup>3</sup>

" Who are that abject pair," I next inquired,  
 " That closely bounding thee upon thy right  
 Lie smoking, like a hand in winter steep'd  
 In the chill stream ? "—" When to this gulf I dropp'd,"  
 He answer'd, " here I found them ; since that hour  
 They have not turn'd, nor ever shall, I ween,  
 Till time hath run his course. One is that dame,  
 The false accuser <sup>4</sup> of the Hebrew youth ;

<sup>1</sup> *Branda's limpid spring.*] A fountain in Siena. <sup>2</sup> *Less.*] Lombardi justly concludes that as Adamo wishes to exaggerate the difficulty of finding the spirit whom he wished to see, "men," and not "piu" ("less," and not "more" than the half of a mile), is probably the true reading ; for there are authorities for both. <sup>3</sup> *The florens with three carats of alloy.*] The floren was a coin that ought to have had twenty-four carats of pure gold. Villani relates, that it was first used at Florence in 1252, an era of great prosperity in the annals of the republic ; before which time their most valuable coinage was of silver. Hist. lib. vi. c. liv. Fazio degli Uberti uses the word to denote the purest gold.

Pura era come l'oro del fiorino. Dittamondo, l. ii. cap. xiv.

<sup>4</sup> *The false accuser.*] Potiphar's wife.

Sinon the other, that false Greek from Troy.  
Sharp fever drains the reeky moistness out,  
In such a cloud upsteam'd." When that he heard,  
One, gall'd perchance to be so darkly named,  
With clench'd hand smote him on the braced paunch,  
That like a drum resounded : but forthwith  
Adamo smote him on the face, the blow  
Returning with his arm, that seem'd as hard.

" Though my o'erweighty limbs have ta'en from me  
The power to move," said he, " I have an arm  
At liberty for such employ." To whom  
Was answer'd : " When thou wentest to the fire,  
Thou hadst it not so ready at command,  
Then readier when it coin'd the impostor gold."

And thus the dropsied : " Ay, now speak'st thou  
true

But there thou gavest not such true testimony,  
When thou wast question'd of the truth, at Troy."

" If I spake false, thou falsely stampd'st the coin,"  
Said Sinon ; " I am here for but one fault,  
And thou for more than any imp beside."

" Remember," he replied, " O perjured one :  
The horse remember, that did teem with death ;  
And all the world be witness to thy guilt."

" To thine," return'd the Greek, " witness the  
thirst

Whence thy tongue cracks, witness the fluid mound  
Rear'd by thy belly up before thine eyes,  
A mass corrupt." To whom the coiner thus :  
" Thy mouth gapes wide as ever to let pass  
Its evil saying. Me if thirst assails,  
Yet I am stuff with moisture. Thou art parch'd :  
Pains rack thy head : no urging wouldst thou need  
To make thee lap Narcissus' mirror up."

I was all fix'd to listen, when my guide  
Admonish'd : " Now beware. A little more,  
And I do quarrel with thee." I perceived  
How angrily he spake, and towards him turn'd  
With shame so poignant, as remember'd yet  
Confounds me. As a man that dreams of harm

Befallen him, dreaming wishes it a dream,  
 And that which is, desires as if it were not ;  
 Such then was I, who, wanting power to speak,  
 Wish'd to excuse myself, and all the while  
 Excused me, though unweeting that I did.

“ More grievous fault than thine has been, less  
 shame,”

My master cried, “ might expiate. Therefore cast  
 All sorrow from thy soul ; and if again  
 Chance bring thee where like conference is held,  
 Think I am ever at thy side. To hear  
 Such wrangling is a joy for vulgar minds.”

## CANTO XXXI

### ARGUMENT

The poets, following the sound of a loud horn, are led by it to the ninth circle, in which there are four rounds, one enclosed within the other, and containing as many sorts of Traitors ; but the present Canto shows only that the circle is encompassed with Giants, one of whom, Antæus, takes them both in his arms and places them at the bottom of the circle.

THE very tongue, whose keen reproof before  
 Had wounded me, that either cheek was stain'd,  
 Now minister'd my cure. So have I heard,  
 Achilles' and his father's javelin caused  
 Pain first, and then the boon of health restored.

Turning our back upon the vale of woe,  
 We cross'd the encircled mound in silence. There  
 Was less than day and less than night, that far  
 Mine eye advanced not : but I heard a horn  
 Sounded so loud, the peal it rang had made  
 The thunder feeble. Following its course  
 The adverse way, my strained eyes were bent  
 On that one spot. So terrible a blast  
 Orlando blew not, when that dismal rout  
 O'erthrew the host of Charlemain, and quench'd  
 His saintly warfare. Thitherward not long



My head was raised, when many a lofty tower  
 Methought I spied. "Master," said I, "what land  
 Is this?" He answer'd straight: "Too long a space  
 Of intervening darkness has thine eye  
 To traverse: thou hast therefore widely err'd  
 In thy imagining. Thither arrived  
 Thou well shalt see, how distance can delude  
 The sense. A little therefore urge thee on."

Then tenderly he caught me by the hand;  
 "Yet know," said he, "ere further we advance,  
 That it less strange may seem, these are not towers,  
 But giants. In the pit they stand immersed,  
 Each from his navel downward, round the bank."

As when a fog disperseth gradually,  
 Our vision traces what the mist involves  
 Condensed in air; so piercing through the gross  
 And gloomy atmosphere, as more and more  
 We near'd toward the brink, mine error fled  
 And fear came o'er me. As with circling round  
 Of turrets, Montereccion<sup>1</sup> crowns his walls;  
 E'en thus the shore, encompassing the abyss,  
 Was turreted with giants, half their length  
 Uprearing, horrible, whom Jove from heaven  
 Yet threatens, when his muttering thunder rolls.

Of one already I descried the face,  
 Shoulders, and breast, and of the belly huge  
 Great part, and both arms down along his ribs.

All-teeming Nature, when her plastic hand  
 Left framing of these monsters, did display  
 Past doubt her wisdom, taking from mad War  
 Such slaves to do his bidding; and if she  
 Repent her not of the elephant and whale,  
 Who ponders well confesses her therein  
 Wiser and more discreet; for when brute force  
 And evil will are back'd with subtlety,  
 Resistance none avails. His visage seem'd  
 In length and bulk, as doth the pine<sup>2</sup> that tops:

<sup>1</sup> *Montereccion.*] A castle near Siena.    <sup>2</sup> *The pine.*] "The large-pine of bronze, which once ornamented the top of the mole of Adrian, was afterwards employed to decorate the top of the belfry of St. Peter;

Saint Peter's Roman fane ; and the other bones  
 Of like proportion, so that from above  
 The bank, which girdled him below, such height  
 Arose his stature, that three Friezelanders  
 Had striven in vain to reach but to his hair,  
 Full thirty ample palms was he exposed  
 Downward from whence a man his garment loops.  
 " Raphael <sup>1</sup> baï ameth, sabì almì : "

So shouted his fierce lips, which sweeter hymns  
 Became not ; and my guide address'd him thus :  
 " O senseless spirit ! let thy horn for thee  
 Interpret : therewith vent thy rage, if rage  
 Or other passion wring thee. Search thy neck,  
 There shalt thou find the belt that binds it on.  
 Spirit confused ! <sup>2</sup> lo, on thy mighty breast  
 Where hangs the baldrick ! " Then to me he spake  
 " He doth accuse himself. Nimrod is this,  
 Through whose ill counsel in the world no more  
 One tongue prevails. But pass we on, nor waste  
 Our words ; for so each language is to him,  
 As his to others, understood by none."

Then to the leftward turning sped we forth,  
 And at a sling's throw found another shade  
 Far fiercer and more huge. I cannot say  
 What master hand had girt him ; but he held  
 Behind the right arm fetter'd, and before,  
 The other, with a chain, that fasten'd him  
 From the neck down ; and five times round his form  
 Apparent met the wreathed links. " This proud one  
 Would of his strength against almighty Jove  
 Make trial," said my guide : " whence he is thus

and having (according to Buti) been thrown down by lightning, it was, after lying some time on the steps of this palace, transferred to the place where it now is, in the Pope's garden, by the side of the great corridore of Belvedere. In the time of our poet, the pine was then either on the belfry or on the steps of St. Peter." Lombardi.

<sup>1</sup> *Raphael, &c.*] These unmeaning sounds, it is supposed, are meant to express the confusion of languages at the building of the tower of Babel. <sup>2</sup> *Spirit confused.*] I had before translated "Wild spirit !" and have altered it at the suggestion of Mr. Darley, who well observed, that "anima confusa" is peculiarly appropriate to Nimrod, the author of the confusion at Babel.

Requited : Ephialtes him they call.

Great was his prowess, when the giants brought  
Fear on the gods : those arms, which then he plied,  
Now moves he never." Forthwith I return'd :  
" Fain would I, if 't were possible, mine eyes,  
Of Briareus immeasurable, gain'd  
Experience next." He answer'd : " Thou shalt see  
Not far from hence Antæus, who both speaks  
And is unfetter'd, who shall place us there  
Where guilt is at its depth. Far onward stands  
Whom thou wouldst fain behold, in chains, and made  
Like to this spirit, save that in his looks  
More fell he seems." By violent earthquake rock'd  
Ne'er shook a tower, so reeling to its base,  
As Ephialtes. More than ever then  
I dreaded death ; nor than the terror more  
Had needed, if I had not seen the cords  
That held him fast. We, straightway journeying on,  
Came to Antæus, who, five ells complete  
Without the head, forth issued from the cave.

" O thou, who in the fortunate vale,<sup>1</sup> that made  
Great Scipio heir of glory, when his sword  
Drove back the troop of Hannibal in flight,  
Who thence of old didst carry for thy spoil  
An hundred lions ; and if thou hadst fought  
In the high conflict on thy brethren's side,  
Seems as men yet believed, that through thine arm  
The sons of earth had conquer'd ; now vouchsafe  
To place us down beneath, where numbing cold  
Locks up Cocytus. Force not that we crave  
Or Tityus' help or Typhon's. Here is one  
Can give what in this realm ye covet. Stoop  
Therefore, nor scornfully distort thy lip.  
He in the upper world can yet bestow  
Renown on thee ; for he doth live, and looks  
For life yet longer, if before the time  
Grace call him not unto herself." Thus spake

<sup>1</sup> *The fortunate vale.*] The country near Carthage. See Liv. Hist. l. xxx., and Lucan, Phars. l. 4, 590, &c. Dante has kept the latter of these writers in his eye throughout all this passage.

The teacher. He in haste forth stretch'd his hands  
 And caught my guide. Alcides <sup>1</sup> whilom felt  
 That grapple, straiten'd sore. Soon as my guide  
 Had felt it, he bespake me thus: "This way,  
 That I may clasp thee"; then so caught me up,  
 That we were both one burden. As appears  
 The tower of Carisenda,<sup>2</sup> from beneath  
 Where it doth lean, if chance a passing cloud  
 So sail across, that opposite it hangs;  
 Such then Antæus seem'd, as at mine ease  
 I mark'd him stooping. I were fain at times  
 To have past another way. Yet in the abyss,  
 That Lucifer with Judas low ingulfs,  
 Lightly he placed us; nor, there leaning, stay'd;  
 But rose, as in a bark the stately mast.

## CANTO XXXII

### ARGUMENT

This Canto treats of the first, and, in part, of the second of those rounds, into which the ninth and last, or frozen circle, is divided. In the former, called *Caïna*, Dante finds *Camiccione de' Pazzi*, who gives him an account of other sinners who are there punished; and in the next, named *Antenora*, he hears in like manner from *Bocca degli Abbati* who his fellow-sufferers are.

COULD I command rough rhymes and hoarse, to suit  
 That hole of sorrow o'er which every rock  
 His firm abutment rears, then might the vein  
 Of fancy rise full springing: but not mine

<sup>1</sup> *Alcides*.] The combat between Hercules and Antæus is adduced by the Poet in his treatise "*De Monarchiâ*," lib. ii. as a proof of the judgment of God displayed in the *duel*, according to the singular superstition of those times. "*Certamine vero dupliciter Dei judicium aperitur vel ex collisione virium, sicut fit per duellum pugilum, qui duelliones etiam vocantur; vel ex contentione plurium ad aliquod signum prævalere conantium, sicut fit per pugnam athletarum currentium ad bravium. Primus istorum modorum apud gentiles figuratus fuit in illo duello Herculis et Antæi, cujus Lucanus meminit in quarto Pharsaliæ, et Ovidius in nono de rerum transmutatione.*"

<sup>2</sup> *The tower of Carisenda*.] The leaning tower at Bologna.

Such measures, and with faltering awe I touch  
The mighty theme ; for to describe the depth  
Of all the universe, is no emprise  
To jest with, and demands a tongue not used  
To infant babbling. But let them assist  
My song, the tuneful maidens, by whose aid  
Amphion wall'd in Thebes ; so with the truth  
My speech shall best accord. Oh ill-starr'd folk,  
Beyond all others wretched ! who abide  
In such a mansion, as scarce thought finds words  
To speak of, better had ye here on earth  
Been flocks, or mountain goats. As down we stood  
In the dark pit beneath the giants' feet,  
But lower far than they, and I did gaze  
Still on the lofty battlement, a voice  
Bespake me thus : " Look how thou walkest. Take  
Good heed, thy soles do tread not on the heads  
Of thy poor brethren." Thereupon I turn'd,  
And saw before and underneath my feet  
A lake, whose frozen surface liker seem'd  
To glass than water. Not so thick a veil  
In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread  
O'er his still course, nor Tanais far remote  
Under the chilling sky. Roll'd o'er that mass  
Had Tabernich or Pietrapana <sup>1</sup> fallen,  
Not e'en its rim had creak'd. As peeps the frog  
Croaking above the wave, what time in dreams  
The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,  
So, to where modest shame appears,<sup>2</sup> thus low  
Blue pinch'd and shrined in ice the spirits stood,  
Moving their teeth in shrill note like the stork.  
His face each downward held ; their mouth the cold,  
Their eyes express'd the dolour of their heart.

A space I look'd around, then at my feet  
Saw two so strictly join'd, that of their head  
The very hairs were mingled. " Tell me ye,  
Whose bosoms thus together press," said I,

<sup>1</sup> *Tabernich or Pietrapana.*] The one a mountain in Slavonia, the other in that tract of country called the Garfagnana, not far from Lucca. <sup>2</sup> *To where modest shame appears.*] "As high as to the face."

“ Who are ye ? ” At that sound their necks they bent ;

And when their looks were lifted up to me,  
Straightway their eyes, before all moist within,  
Distill'd upon their lips, and the frost bound  
The tears betwixt those orbs, and held them there.  
Plank unto plank hath never cramp closed up  
So stoutly. Whence, like two enraged goats,  
They clash'd together : them such fury seized.

And one, from whom the cold both ears had reft,  
Exclaim'd, still looking downward : “ Why on us  
Dost speculate so long ? If thou wouldst know  
Who are these two,<sup>1</sup> the valley, whence his wave  
Bisenzio slopes, did for its master own  
Their sire Alberto, and next him themselves.  
They from one body issued : and throughout  
Caïna thou mayst search, nor find a shade  
More worthy in congealment to be fix'd ;  
Not him,<sup>2</sup> whose breast and shadow Arthur's hand  
At that one blow dissever'd ; not Focaccia ;<sup>3</sup>  
No, not this spirit, whose o'erjutting head  
Obstructs my onward view : he bore the name  
Of Mascheroni : <sup>4</sup> Tuscan if thou be,  
Well knowest who he was. And to cut short  
All further question, in my form behold  
What once was Camiccione.<sup>5</sup> I await

<sup>1</sup> *Who are these two.*] Alessandro and Napoleone, sons of Alberto Alberti, who murdered each other. They were proprietors of the valley of Falterona, where the Bisenzio has its source, a river that falls into the Arno about six miles from Florence. <sup>2</sup> *Not him.*] Mordrec, son of King Arthur. In the romance of Lancelot of the Lake, Arthur, having discovered the traitorous intentions of his son, pierces him through with the stroke of his lance, so that the sunbeam passes through the body of Mordrec ; and this disruption of the shadow is no doubt what our Poet alludes to in the text. <sup>3</sup> *Focaccia.*] Focaccia of Cancellieri (the Pistoian family) whose atrocious act of revenge against his uncle is said to have given rise to the parties of the Bianchi and Neri, in the year 1300. See G. Villani, Hist. lib. viii. c. xxxvii. and Macchiavelli, Hist. lib. ii. The account of the latter writer differs much from that given by Landino in his Commentary. <sup>4</sup> *Mascheroni.*] Sassol Mascheroni, a Florentine, who also murdered his uncle. <sup>5</sup> *Camiccione.*] Camiccione de' Pazzi of Valdarno, by whom his kinsman Ubertino was treacherously put to death.



Carlino <sup>1</sup> here my kinsman, whose deep guilt  
 Shall wash out mine." A thousand visages  
 Then mark'd I, which the keen and eager cold  
 Had shaped into a doggish grin; whence creeps  
 A shivering horror o'er me, at the thought  
 Of those frore shallows. While we journey'd on  
 Toward the middle, at whose point unites  
 All heavy substance, and I trembling went  
 Through that eternal chillness, I know not  
 If will it were, or destiny, or chance,  
 But, passing 'midst the heads, my foot did strike  
 With violent blow against the face of one.

"Wherefore dost bruise me?" weeping he ex-  
 claim'd.

"Unless thy errand be some fresh revenge  
 For Montaperti,<sup>2</sup> wherefore troublest me?"

I thus: "Instructor, now await me, here  
 That I through him may rid me of my doubt:  
 Thenceforth what haste thou wilt." The teacher  
 paused

And to that shade I spake, who bitterly  
 Still cursed me in his wrath. "What art thou,  
 speak,

That railest thus on others?" He replied:  
 "Now who art thou, that smiting others' cheeks,  
 Through Antenora<sup>3</sup> roamest, with such force  
 As were past sufferance, wert thou living still?"

"And I am living, to thy joy perchance,"  
 Was my reply, "if fame be dear to thee,

<sup>1</sup> *Carlino*.] One of the same family. He betrayed the Castel di Piano Travigne, in Valdarno, to the Florentines, after the refugees of the Bianco and Ghibelline party had defended it against a siege for twenty-nine days, in the summer of 1302. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. lii. and Dino Compagni, lib. ii. <sup>2</sup> *Montaperti*.] The defeat of the Guelphi at Montaperti, occasioned by the treachery of Bocca degli Abbati, who, during the engagement, cut off the hand of Giacompo del Vacca de' Pazzi, bearer of the Florentine standard. G. Villani, lib. vi. c. lxxx. and notes to Canto x. This event happened in 1260. <sup>3</sup> *Antenora*.] "So called from Antenor, who, according to Dictys Cretensis (de Bello Troj. lib. v.) and Dares Phrygius (De Excidio Trojæ) betrayed Troy his country." Lombardi. See note on Purg. Canto v. 75. Antenor acts this part in Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, and Chaucer's *Troilus and Creseide*.

That with the rest I may thy name enrol."

"The contrary of what I covet most,"

Said he, "thou tender'st: hence! nor vex me more.  
Ill knowest thou to flatter in this vale."

Then seizing on his hinder scalp I cried:

"Name thee, or not a hair shall tarry here."

"Rend all away," he answer'd, "yet for that  
I will not tell, nor show thee, who I am,  
Though at my head thou pluck a thousand times."

Now I had grasp'd his tresses, and stript off  
More than one tuft, he barking, with his eyes  
Drawn in and downward, when another cried,  
"What ails thee, Bocca? Sound not loud enough  
Thy chattering teeth, but thou must bark outright?  
What devil wrings thee?"—"Now," said I, "be  
dumb,

Accursed traitor! To thy shame, of thee  
True tidings will I bear."—"Off!" he replied;  
"Tell what thou list: but, as thou scape from  
hence,

To speak of him whose tongue hath been so glib,  
Forget not: here he wails the Frenchman's gold.  
'Him of Duera,'<sup>1</sup> thou canst say, 'I mark'd,  
'Where the starved sinners pine.' If thou be ask'd  
What other shade was with them, at thy side  
Is Beccaria,<sup>2</sup> whose red gorge distain'd  
The biting axe of Florence. Further on,  
If I misdeem not, Soldanieri<sup>3</sup> bides,

<sup>1</sup> *Him of Duera.*] Buoso of Cremona, of the family of Duera, who was bribed by Guy de Montfort, to leave a pass between Piedmont and Parma, with the defence of which he had been intrusted by the Ghibellines, open to the army of Charles of Anjou, A.D. 1265, at which the people of Cremona were so enraged, that they extirpated the whole family. G. Villani, lib. vii. c. iv. <sup>2</sup> *Beccaria.*] Abbot of Vallombrosa who was the Pope's Legate at Florence, where his intrigues in favour of the Ghibellines being discovered, he was beheaded. I do not find the occurrence in Villani, nor do the commentators say to what Pope he was legate. By Landino he is reported to have been from Parma; by Vellutello, from Pavia. <sup>3</sup> *Soldanieri.*] "Gianni Soldanieri," says Villani, Hist. lib. vii. c. xiv., "put himself at the head of the people, in the hopes of rising into power, not aware that the result would be mischief to the Ghibelline party, and his own ruin; an event which seems ever to have befallen him who has headed the populace in Florence."—A.D. 1266.

With Ganellon,<sup>1</sup> and Tribaldello,<sup>2</sup> him  
Who oped Faenza when the people slept."

We now had left him, passing on our way,  
When I beheld two spirits by the ice  
Pent in one hollow, that the head of one  
Was cowl unto the other; and as bread  
Is raven'd up through hunger, the uppermost  
Did so apply his fangs to the other's brain,  
Where the spine joins it. Not more furiously  
On Menalippus' temples Tydeus<sup>3</sup> gnawed,  
Than on that skull and on its garbage he.

"O thou! who show'st so beastly sign of hate  
'Gainst him thou prey'st on, let me hear," said I,  
"The cause, on such condition, that if right  
Warrant thy grievance, knowing who ye are,  
And what the colour of his sinning was,  
I may repay thee in the world above,  
If that, wherewith I speak, be moist so long."

## CANTO XXXIII

### ARGUMENT

The Poet is told by Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi of the cruel manner in which he and his children were famished in the tower at Pisa, by command of the Archbishop Ruggieri. He next discourses of the third round, called Ptolomea, wherein those are punished who have betrayed others under the semblance of kindness; and among these he finds the Friar Alberigo de' Manfredi, who tells him of one whose soul was already tormented in that place, though his body appeared still to be alive upon the earth, being yielded up to the governance of a fiend.

His jaws uplifting from their fell repast,  
That sinner wiped them on the hairs o' the head,  
Which he behind had mangled, then began:  
"Thy will obeying, I call up afresh

<sup>1</sup> *Ganellon.*] The betrayer of Charlemain, mentioned by Archbishop Turpin. He is a common instance of treachery with the poets of the Middle Ages. <sup>2</sup> *Tribaldello.*] Tribaldello de' Manfredi, who was bribed to betray the city of Faenza, A.D. 1282. G. Villani, lib. vii. c. lxxx. <sup>3</sup> *Tydeus.*] See Statius, Theb. lib. viii. *ad finem.*

Sorrow past cure ; which, but to think of, wrings  
 My heart, or ere I tell on 't. But if words,  
 That I may utter, shall prove seed to bear  
 Fruit of eternal infamy to him,  
 The traitor whom I gnaw at, thou at once  
 Shalt see me speak and weep. Who thou mayst be  
 I know not, nor how here below art come :  
 But Florentine thou seemest of a truth,  
 When I do hear thee. Know, I was on earth  
 Count Ugolino,<sup>1</sup> and the Archbishop he

<sup>1</sup> *Count Ugolino.*] "In the year 1288, in the month of July, Pisa was much divided by competitors for the sovereignty ; one party, composed of certain of the Guelfi, being headed by the Judge Nino di Gallura de' Visconti ; another, consisting of others of the same faction, by the Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi ; and a third by the Archbishop Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, with the Lanfranchi, Sismondi, Gualandi, and other Ghibelline houses. The Count Ugolino, to effect his purpose, united with the Archbishop and his party, and having betrayed Nino, his sister's son, they contrived that he and his followers should either be driven out of Pisa, or their persons seized. Nino hearing this, and not seeing any means of defending himself, retired to Calci, his castle, and formed an alliance with the Florentines and people of Lucca, against the Pisans. The Count, before Nino was gone, in order to cover his treachery, when everything was settled for his expulsion, quitted Pisa, and repaired to a manor of his called Settimo ; whence, as soon as he was informed of Nino's departure, he returned to Pisa with great rejoicing and festivity, and was elevated to the supreme power with every demonstration of triumph and honour. But his greatness was not of long continuance. It pleased the Almighty that a total reverse of fortune should ensue, as a punishment for his acts of treachery and guilt ; for he was said to have poisoned the Count Anselmo da Capraia, his sister's son, on account of the envy and fear excited in his mind by the high esteem in which the gracious manners of Anselmo were held by the Pisans.—The power of the Guelfi being so much diminished, the Archbishop devised means to betray the Count Ugolino, and caused him to be suddenly attacked in his palace by the fury of the people, whom he had exasperated, by telling them that Ugolino had betrayed Pisa, and given up their castles to the citizens of Florence and of Lucca. He was immediately compelled to surrender ; his bastard son and his grandson fell in the assault ; and two of his sons, with their two sons also, were conveyed to prison." G. Villani, lib. vii. c. cxx. "In the following March, the Pisans, who had imprisoned the Count Ugolino, with two of his sons and two of his grandchildren, the offspring of his son the Count Guelfo, in a tower on the Piazza of the Anziani, caused the tower to be locked, the key thrown into the Arno, and all food to be withheld from them. In a few days they died of hunger ; but the Count first with loud cries declared his penitence, and yet neither priest nor friar was allowed to shrive him. All the five, when dead, were dragged out of the prison, and meanly interred ; and from thenceforward the tower was called the tower of famine, and so shall

Ruggieri. Why I neighbour him so close,  
 Now list. That through effect of his ill thoughts  
 In him my trust reposing, I was ta'en  
 And after murder'd, need is not I tell.  
 What therefore thou canst not have heard, that is,  
 How cruel was the murder, shalt thou hear,  
 And know if he have wrong'd me. A small grate  
 Within that mew, which for my sake the name  
 Of famine bears, where others yet must pine,  
 Already through its opening several moons<sup>1</sup>  
 Had shown me, when I slept the evil sleep  
 That from the future tore the curtain off.  
 This one, methought, as master of the sport,  
 Rode forth to chase the gaunt wolf, and his whelps,  
 Unto the mountain<sup>2</sup> which forbids the sight  
 Of Lucca to the Pisan. With lean brachs  
 Inquisitive and keen, before him ranged  
 Lanfranchi with Sismondi and Gualandi.  
 After short course the father and the sons  
 Seem'd tired and lagging, and methought I saw  
 The sharp tusks gore their sides. When I awoke,  
 Before the dawn, amid their sleep I heard  
 My sons (for they were with me) weep and ask  
 For bread. Right cruel art thou, if no pang  
 Thou feel at thinking what my heart foretold;  
 And if not now, why use thy tears to flow?  
 Now had they waken'd; and the hour drew near  
 When they were wont to bring us food; the mind  
 Of each misgave him through his dream, and I  
 Heard, at its outlet underneath lock'd up  
 The horrible tower: whence, uttering not a word,

ever be." *Ibid.* c. cxxvii. Troya asserts that Dante, for the sake of poetical effect, has much misrepresented the real facts. See his *Veltro Allegorico di Dante*, ed. 1826, p. 28, 9. This would render a conjecture, which the same writer elsewhere hazards, still more improbable; that the story might have been written by Dante when the facts were yet recent, and afterwards introduced into his poem. *Ibid.* p. 96.

<sup>1</sup> *Several moons.*] Many editions, and the greater part of the MSS. instead of "più lune," read "più lume"; according to which reading Ugolino would say, that the day had broke, and shone through the grated window of the prison, before he fell asleep. <sup>2</sup> *Unto the mountain.*] The mountain S. Giuliano between Pisa and Lucca.

I look'd upon the visage of my sons.  
I wept not : so all stone I felt within.  
They wept : and one, my little Anselm, cried,  
'Thou lookest so ! Father, what ails thee ? ' Yet  
I shed no tear, nor answer'd all that day  
Nor the next night, until another sun  
Came out upon the world. When a faint beam  
Had to our doleful prison made its way,  
And in four countenances I descried  
The image of my own, on either hand  
Through agony I bit ; and they, who thought  
I did it through desire of feeding, rose  
O' the sudden, and cried, ' Father, we should grieve  
'Far less, if thou wouldst eat of us : thou gavest  
'These weeds of miserable flesh we wear ;  
'And do thou strip them off from us again.'  
Then, not to make them sadder, I kept down  
My spirit in stillness. That day and the next  
We all were silent. Ah, obdurate earth !  
Why open'dst not upon us ? When we came  
To the fourth day, then Gaddo at my feet  
Outstretch'd did fling him, crying, ' Hast no help  
'For me, my father ! ' There he died ; and e'en  
Plainly as thou seest me, saw I the three  
Fall one by one 'twixt the fifth day and sixth :  
Whence I betook me, now grown blind, to grope  
Over them all, and for three days aloud  
Call'd on them who were dead. Then, fasting got  
The mastery of grief." Thus having spoke,  
Once more upon the wretched skull his teeth  
He fasten'd like a mastiff's 'gainst the bone,  
Firm and unyielding. Oh, thou Pisa ! shame  
Of all the people, who their dwelling make  
In that fair region, where the Italian voice  
Is heard ; since that thy neighbours are so slack  
To punish, from their deep foundations rise  
Capraia and Gorgona,<sup>1</sup> and dam up  
The mouth of Arno ; that each soul in thee  
May perish in the waters. What if fame

<sup>1</sup> *Capraia and Gorgona.*] Small islands near the mouth of the Arno.



Reported that thy castles were betray'd  
By Ugolino, yet no right hadst thou  
To stretch his children on the rack. For them,  
Brigata, Uguccione, and the pair  
Of gentle ones, of whom my song hath told,  
Their tender years, thou modern Thebes, did make  
Uncapable of guilt. Onward we pass'd,  
Where others, skarf'd in rugged folds of ice,  
Not on their feet were turn'd, but each reversed.

There, very weeping suffers not to weep ;  
For, at their eyes, grief, seeking passage, finds  
Impediment, and rolling inward turns  
For increase of sharp anguish : the first tears  
Hang cluster'd, and like crystal vizors show,  
Under the socket brimming all the cup.

Now though the cold had from my face dislodged  
Each feeling, as 't were callous, yet me seem'd  
Some breath of wind I felt. "Whence cometh this,"  
Said I, "my Master ? Is not here below  
All vapour quench'd ?"—"Thou shalt be speedily,"  
He answer'd, "where thine eyes shall tell thee whence,  
The cause descrying of this airy shower."

Then cried out one, in the chill crust who mourn'd :  
"O souls ! so cruel, that the farthest post  
Hath been assign'd you, from this face remove  
The harden'd veil ; that I may vent the grief  
Impregnate at my heart, some little space,  
Ere it congeal again." I thus replied :  
"Say who thou wast, if thou wouldst have mine aid ;  
And if I extricate thee not, far down  
As to the lowest ice may I descend."

"The friar Alberigo,"<sup>1</sup> answer'd he,  
"Am I, who from the evil garden pluck'd  
Its fruitage, and am here repaid, the date

<sup>1</sup> *The friar Alberigo.*] Alberigo de' Manfredi of Faenza, one of the Frati Godenti, Joyous Friars, who having quarrelled with some of his brotherhood, under pretence of wishing to be reconciled, invited them to a banquet, at the conclusion of which he called for the fruit, a signal for the assassins to rush in and dispatch those whom he had marked for destruction. Hence, adds Landino, it is said proverbially of one who has been stabbed, that he has had some of the Friar Alberigo's fruit.

More luscious for my fig."—"Hah!" I exclaim'd,  
 "Art thou too dead?"—"How in the world aloft  
 It fareth with my body," answer'd he,  
 "I am right ignorant. Such privilege  
 Hath Ptolomea,<sup>1</sup> that oft-times the soul  
 Drops hither, ere by Atropos divorced.  
 And that thou mayst wipe out more willingly  
 The glazed tear-drops that o'erlay mine eyes,  
 Know that the soul, that moment she betrays,  
 As I did, yields her body to a fiend  
 Who after moves and governs it at will,  
 Till all its time be rounded: headlong she  
 Falls to this cistern. And perchance above  
 Doth yet appear the body of a ghost,  
 Who here behind me winters. Him thou know'st,  
 If thou but newly art arrived below.  
 The years are many that have past away,  
 Since to this fastness Branca Doria<sup>2</sup> came."

"Now," answer'd I, "methinks thou mockest me;  
 For Branca Doria never yet hath died,  
 But doth all natural functions of a man,  
 Eats, drinks, and sleeps, and putteth raiment on."

He thus: "Not yet unto that upper foss  
 By th' evil talons guarded, where the pitch  
 Tenacious boils, had Michel Zanche reach'd,  
 When this one left a demon in his stead  
 In his own body, and of one his kin,  
 Who with him treachery wrought. But now put  
 forth

Thy hand, and ope mine eyes." I oped them not.  
 Ill manners were best courtesy to him.

Ah Genoese! men perverse in every way,  
 With every foulness stain'd, why from the earth  
 Are ye not cancel'd? Such an one of yours

<sup>1</sup> *Ptolomea*.] This circle is named Ptolomea from Ptolemy the son of Abubus, by whom Simon and his sons were murdered, at a great banquet he had made for them. See 1 Maccabees, ch. xvi. Or from Ptolemy, King of Egypt, the betrayer of Pompey the Great.

<sup>2</sup> *Branca Doria*.] The family of Doria was possessed of great influence in Genoa. Branca is said to have murdered his father-in-law Michel Zanche, introduced in Canto xxii.

I with Romagna's darkest spirit <sup>1</sup> found,  
 As, for his doings, even now in soul  
 Is in Cocytus plunged, and yet doth seem  
 In body still alive upon the earth.

## CANTO XXXIV

## ARGUMENT

In the fourth and last round of the ninth circle, those who have betrayed their benefactors are wholly covered with ice. And in the midst is Lucifer, at whose back Dante and Virgil ascend, till by a secret path they reach the surface of the other hemisphere of the earth, and once more obtain sight of the stars.

"THE banners <sup>2</sup> of Hell's Monarch do come forth  
 Toward us ; therefore look," so spake my guide,  
 " If thou discern him." As, when breathes a cloud  
 Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night  
 Fall on our hemisphere, seems view'd from far  
 A windmill, which the blast stirs briskly round ;  
 Such was the fabric then methought I saw.

To shield me from the wind, forthwith I drew  
 Behind my guide : no covert else was there.

Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain  
 Record the marvel) where the souls were all  
 Whelm'd underneath, transparent, as through glass  
 Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid ;  
 Others stood upright, this upon the soles,  
 That on his head, a third with face to feet  
 Arch'd like a bow. When to the point we came,  
 Whereat my guide was pleased that I should see  
 The creature eminent in beauty once,  
 He from before me stepp'd and made me pause.

" Lo ! " he exclaim'd, " lo Dis ; and lo the place,

<sup>1</sup> *Romagna's darkest spirit.*] The friar Alberigo.

<sup>2</sup> *The banners.*] *Vexilla regis prodeunt inferni.*

A parody of the first verse in a hymn that was sung by the church in praise of the Cross.

Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with strength."

How frozen and how faint I then became,  
Ask me not, reader ! for I write it not ;  
Since words would fail to tell thee of my state.  
I was not dead nor living.<sup>1</sup> Think thyself,  
If quick conception work in thee at all,  
How I did feel. That emperor, who sways  
The realm of sorrow, at mid breast from the ice  
Stood forth ; and I in stature am more like  
A giant, than the giants are his arms.  
Mark now how great that whole must be, which suits  
With such a part. If he were beautiful  
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare  
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him  
May all our misery flow. Oh what a sight !  
How passing strange it seem'd, when I did spy  
Upon his head three faces : <sup>2</sup> one in front  
Of hue vermilion, the other two with this  
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest ;  
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd ; the left  
To look on, such as come from whence old Nile  
Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth  
Two mighty wings, enormous as became  
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw  
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had they,  
But were in texture like a bat ; and these  
He flapp'd i' th' air, that from him issued still

<sup>1</sup> *I was not dead nor living.*]

. . . οὐτ' ἐν τοῖς θριμίνοις,  
οὐτ' ἐν ζῶσιν ἑρπιδιμουμένῃ.

Euripides, Supplices, v. 979. Markland's edit.

\_\_\_\_\_ tum ibi me nescio quis arripit

Timidam atque pavidam, nec vivam nec mortuam.

Plautus, Curculio, act v. sc. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Three faces.*] "The first of these sins is anger, which he signifies by the red face ; the second, represented by that between pale and yellow, is envy, and not, as others have said, avarice ; and the third, denoted by the black, is a melancholy humour that causes a man's thoughts to be dark and evil, and averse from all joy and tranquillity." Vellutello. Lombardi would understand the three faces to signify the three parts of the world then known, in all of which Lucifer had his subjects : the red denoting the Europeans, who were in the middle : the yellow, the Asiatics, on the right ; and the black, the Africans, who were on the left ; according to the position of the faces themselves.

Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth  
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept : the tears  
Adown three chins distill'd with bloody foam.  
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champ'd,  
Bruised as with ponderous engine ; so that three  
Were in this guise tormented. But far more  
Than from that gnawing, was the foremost pang'd  
By the fierce rending, whence oft-times the back  
Was stript of all its skin. "That upper spirit,  
Who hath worst punishment," so spake my guide,  
"Is Judas, he that hath his head within  
And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,  
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw  
Who hangs, is Brutus : lo ! how he doth writhe  
And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that appears  
So large of limb. But night now re-ascends ;  
And it is time for parting. All is seen."

I clipp'd him round the neck ; for so he bade :  
And noting time and place, he, when the wings  
Enough were oped, caught fast the shaggy sides,  
And down from pile to pile descending stepp'd  
Between the thick fell and the jagged ice.

Soon as he reach'd the point, whereat the thigh  
Upon the swelling of the haunches turns,  
My leader there, with pain and struggling hard,  
Turn'd round his head where his feet stood before,  
And grappled at the fell as one who mounts ;  
That into hell methought we turn'd again.

"Expect that by such stairs as these," thus spake  
The teacher, panting like a man forespent,  
"We must depart from evil so extreme" :  
Then at a rocky opening issued forth,  
And placed me on the brink to sit, next join'd  
With wary step my side. I raised mine eyes,  
Believing that I Lucifer should see  
Where he was lately left, but saw him now  
With legs held upward. Let the grosser sort,  
Who see not what the point was I had past,  
Bethink them if sore toil oppress'd me then.

"Arise," my master cried, "upon thy feet.

The way is long, and much uncouth the road ;  
 And now within one hour and half of noon <sup>1</sup>  
 The sun returns." It was no palace-hall  
 Lofty and luminous wherein we stood,  
 But natural dungeon where ill-footing was  
 And scant supply of light. " Ere from the abyss  
 I separate," thus when risen I began :  
 " My guide ! vouchsafe few words to set me free  
 From error's thralldom. Where is now the ice ?  
 How standeth he in posture thus reversed ?  
 And how from eve to morn in space so brief  
 Hath the sun made his transit ? " He in few  
 Thus answering spake : " Thou deemest thou art still  
 On the other side the centre, where I grasp'd  
 The abhorred worm that boreth through the world.  
 Thou wast on the other side, so long as I  
 Descended ; when I turn'd, thou didst o'erpass  
 That point,<sup>2</sup> to which from every part is dragg'd  
 All heavy substance. Thou art now arrived  
 Under the hemisphere opposed to that,  
 Which the great continent doth overspread,  
 And underneath whose canopy expired  
 The Man, that was born sinless and so lived.  
 Thy feet are planted on the smallest sphere,  
 Whose other aspect is Judecca. Morn  
 Here rises, when there evening sets : and he,  
 Whose shaggy pile we scaled, yet standeth fix'd,  
 As at the first. On this part he fell down  
 From heaven ; and th' earth, here prominent before,  
 Through fear of him did veil her with the sea,  
 And to our hemisphere retired. Perchance,  
 To shun him, was the vacant space left here,  
 By what of firm land on this side appears,<sup>3</sup>  
 That sprang aloof." There is a place beneath,

<sup>1</sup> *Within one hour and half of noon.*] The Poet uses the Hebrew manner of computing the day, according to which the third hour answers to our twelve o'clock at noon. <sup>2</sup> *That point.*] Monti observes, that if this passage had chanced to meet the eye of Newton, it might better have awakened his thought to conceive the system of attraction, than the accidental falling of an apple. Proposta, v. iii. p.<sup>te</sup> 2, p. lxxviii. 8°, 1824. <sup>3</sup> *By what of firm land on this side appears.*] The mountain of Purgatory.



From Belzebub as distant, as extends  
The vaulted tomb ; <sup>1</sup> discover'd not by sight,  
But by the sound of brooklet, that descends  
This way along the hollow of a rock,  
Which, as it winds with no precipitous course,  
The wave hath eaten. By that hidden way  
My guide and I did enter, to return  
To the fair world : and heedless of repose  
We climb'd, he first, I following his steps,  
Till on our view the beautiful lights of Heaven  
Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave :  
Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.

<sup>1</sup> *The vaulted tomb.*] "La tomba." This word is used to express  
~~the~~ the whole depth of the infernal region.



# PURGATORIO

## CANTO I

### ARGUMENT

The Poet describes the delight he experienced at issuing a little before dawn from the infernal regions, into the pure air that surrounds the isle of Purgatory; and then relates how, turning to the right, he beheld four stars never seen before but by our first parents, and met on his left the shade of Cato of Utica, who, having warned him and Virgil what is needful to be done before they proceed on their way through Purgatory, disappears; and the two poets go towards the shore, where Virgil cleanses Dante's face with the dew, and girds him with a reed, as Cato had commanded.

O'ER better waves to speed her rapid course  
The light bark of my genius lifts the sail,  
Well pleased to leave so cruel sea behind;  
And of that second region will I sing,  
In which the human spirit from sinful blot  
Is purged, and for ascent to Heaven prepares.

Here, O ye hallow'd Nine! for in your train  
I follow, here the deaden'd strain revive;  
Nor let Calliope refuse to sound  
A somewhat higher song, of that loud tone  
Which when the wretched birds of chattering note<sup>1</sup>  
Had heard, they of forgiveness lost all hope.

Sweet hue of eastern sapphire, that was spread  
O'er the serene aspect of the pure air,  
High up as the first circle,<sup>2</sup> to mine eyes

<sup>1</sup> *Birds of chattering note.*] For the fable of the daughters of Pierus, who challenged the Muses to sing, and were by them changed into magpies, see Ovid, *Metam. lib. v. fab. 5.* <sup>2</sup> *The first circle.*] Either, as some suppose, the moon; or, as Lombardi (who likes to be as far off the rest of the commentators as possible) will have it, the highest circle of the stars.

Unwonted joy renew'd, soon as I 'scaped  
 Forth from the atmosphere of deadly gloom,  
 That had mine eyes and bosom fill'd with grief,  
 The radiant planet,<sup>1</sup> that to love invites,  
 Made all the orient laugh, and veil'd beneath  
 The Pisces' light,<sup>2</sup> that in his escort came.

To the right hand I turn'd, and fix'd my mind  
 On the other pole attentive, where I saw  
 Four stars <sup>3</sup> ne'er seen before save by the ken  
 Of our first parents.<sup>4</sup> Heaven of their rays  
 Seem'd joyous. O thou northern site ! bereft  
 Indeed, and widow'd, since of these deprived.

As from this view I had desisted, straight  
 Turning a little towards the other pole,  
 There from whence now the wain <sup>5</sup> had disappear'd,  
 I saw an old man <sup>6</sup> standing by my side

<sup>1</sup> *Planet.*] Venus.    <sup>2</sup> *The Pisces' light.*] The constellation of the Fish veiled by the more luminous body of Venus, then a morning star.  
<sup>3</sup> *Four stars.*] Venturi observes that "Dante here speaks as a poet, and almost in the spirit of prophecy; or, what is more likely, describes the heaven about that pole according to his own invention. In our days," he adds, "the cross, composed of four stars, three of the second and one of the third magnitude, serves as a guide to those who sail from Europe to the south; but in the age of Dante these discoveries had not been made": yet it appears probable, that either from long tradition, or from the relation of later voyagers, the real truth might not have been unknown to our Poet. Seneca's prediction of the discovery of America may be accounted for in a similar manner. But whatever may be thought of this, it is certain that the four stars are here symbolical of the four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. See Canto xxxi. v. 105. M. Artaud mentions a globe constructed by an Arabian in Egypt, with the date of the year 622 of the Hegira, corresponding to 1225 of our era, in which the southern cross is positively marked. See his *Histoire de Dante*, ch. xxxi. and xl. 8°, par. 1841.    <sup>4</sup> *Our first parents.*] In the terrestrial paradise, placed, as we shall see, by our Poet, on the summit of Purgatory.    <sup>5</sup> *The wain.*] Charles's Wain, or Boötes.  
<sup>6</sup> *An old man.*] Cato.

Secretosque pios; his dantem jura Catonem. Virg., *Æn.* viii. 670. The commentators, and Lombardi amongst the rest, might have saved themselves and their readers much needless trouble if they would have consulted the prose writings of Dante with more diligence. In the *Convito*, p. 211, he has himself declared his opinion of the illustrious Roman. "Quale uomo, &c." "What earthly man was more worthy to follow God than Cato? Certainly none." And again, p. 212. "Nel nome di cui, &c." "In whose name, whatever needs be said concerning the signs of nobility may be concluded; for, in him, that nobility displays them all throughout all ages."

Alone, so worthy of reverence in his look,  
That ne'er from son to father more was owed.  
Low down his beard, and mix'd with hoary white,  
Descended, like his locks, which, parting, fell  
Upon his breast in double fold. The beams  
Of those four luminaries on his face  
So brightly shone, and with such radiance clear  
Deck'd it, that I beheld him as the sun.

"Say who are ye, that stemming the blind stream,  
Forth from the eternal prison-house have fled?"  
He spoke and moved those venerable plumes.  
"Who hath conducted, or with lantern sure  
Lights you emerging from the depth of night,  
That makes the infernal valley ever black?  
Are the firm statutes of the dread abyss  
Broken, or in high heaven new laws ordain'd,  
That thus, condemn'd, ye to my caves approach?"

My guide, then laying hold on me, by words  
And intimations given with hand and head,  
Made my bent knees and eye submissive pay  
Due reverence; then thus to him replied:

"Not of myself I come; a Dame from heaven<sup>1</sup>  
Descending, him besought me in my charge  
To bring. But since thy will implies, that more  
Our true condition I unfold at large,  
Mine is not to deny thee thy request.  
This mortal ne'er hath seen the furthest gloom;  
But erring by his folly had approach'd  
So near, that little space was left to turn.  
Then, as before I told, I was dispatch'd  
To work his rescue; and no way remain'd  
Save this which I have ta'en. I have display'd  
Before him all the regions of the bad;  
And purpose now those spirits to display,  
That under thy command are purged from sin.  
How I have brought him would be long to say.  
From high descends the virtue, by whose aid  
I to thy sight and hearing him have led.  
Now may our coming please thee. In the search

<sup>1</sup> *A Dame from heaven.*] Beatrice.

Of liberty he journeys : that how dear,  
 They know who for her sake have life refused.  
 Thou knowest, to whom death for her was sweet  
 In Utica, where thou didst leave those weeds,  
 That in the last great day will shine so bright.  
 For us the eternal edicts are unmoved :  
 He breathes, and I of Minos am not bound,  
 Abiding in that circle, where the eyes  
 Of thy chaste Marcia<sup>1</sup> beam, who still in look  
 Prays thee, O hallow'd spirit ! to own her thine.  
 Then by her love we implore thee, let us pass  
 Through thy seven regions ;<sup>2</sup> for which, best thanks  
 I for thy favour will to her return,  
 If mention there below thou not disdain."

" Marcia so pleasing in my sight was found,"  
 He then to him rejoin'd, " while I was there,  
 That all she ask'd me I was fain to grant.  
 Now that beyond the accursed stream she dwells,  
 She may no longer move me, by that law,<sup>3</sup>  
 Which was ordain'd me, when I issued thence.  
 Not so, if Dame from heaven, as thou sayst,  
 Moves and directs thee ; then no flattery needs.  
 Enough for me that in her name thou ask.  
 Go therefore now : and with a slender reed<sup>4</sup>  
 See that thou duly gird him, and his face  
 Lave, till all sordid stain thou wipe from thence.  
 For not with eye, by any cloud obscured,  
 Would it be seemly before Him to come,  
 Who stands the foremost minister in heaven.  
 This islet all around, there far beneath,  
 Where the wave beats it, on the oozy bed  
 Produces store of reeds. No other plant,  
 Cover'd with leaves, or harden'd in its stalk,  
 There lives, not bending to the water's sway.  
 After, this way return not ; but the sun

<sup>1</sup> *Marcia.*] Editor's note : The wife of Cato.      <sup>2</sup> *Through thy seven regions.*] The seven rounds of Purgatory, in which the seven capital sins are punished.      <sup>3</sup> *By that law.*] When he was delivered by Christ from limbo, a change of affections accompanied his change of place.      <sup>4</sup> *A slender reed.*] The reed is here supposed, with sufficient probability, to be meant for a type of simplicity and patience.



Will show you, that now rises, where to take  
The mountain in its easiest ascent."

He disappear'd ; and I myself upraised  
Speechless, and to my guide retiring close,  
Toward him turn'd mine eyes. He thus began :  
" My son ! observant thou my steps pursue.  
We must retreat to rereward ; for that way  
The champain to its low extreme declines."

The dawn had chased the matin hour of prime,  
Which fled before it, so that from afar  
I spied the trembling of the ocean stream.

We traversed the deserted plain, as one  
Who, wander'd from his track, thinks every step  
Trodden in vain till he regain the path.

When we had come, where yet the tender dew  
Strove with the sun, and in a place where fresh  
The wind breathed o'er it, while it slowly dried ;  
Both hands extended on the watery grass  
My master placed, in graceful act and kind.  
Whence I of his intent before apprized,  
Stretch'd out to him my cheeks suffused with tears.  
There to my visage he anew restored  
That hue which the dun shades of hell conceal'd.

Then on the solitary shore arrived,  
That never sailing on its waters saw  
Man that could after measure back his course,  
He girt me in such manner as had pleased  
Him who instructed ; and O, strange to tell !  
As he selected every humble plant,  
Wherever one was pluck'd another <sup>1</sup> there  
Resembling, straightway in its place arose.

<sup>1</sup> *Another.*] From Virg., *Æn.* lib. vi. 143. Primo avulso non deficit alter.

## CANTO II

## ARGUMENT

They behold a vessel under conduct of an angel, coming over the waves with spirits to Purgatory, among whom, when the passengers have landed, Dante recognises his friend Casella ; but, while they are entertained by him with a song, they hear Cato exclaiming against their negligent loitering, and at that rebuke hasten forwards to the mountain.

Now had the sun <sup>1</sup> to that horizon reach'd,  
That covers, with the most exalted point  
Of its meridian circle, Salem's walls ;  
And night, that opposite to him her orb  
Rounds, from the stream of Ganges issued forth,  
Holding the scales,<sup>2</sup> that from her hands are dropt  
When she reigns highest : <sup>3</sup> so that where I was,  
Aurora's white and vermeil-tinctured cheek  
To orange turn'd as she in age increased.

Meanwhile we linger'd by the water's brink,  
Like men who, musing on their road, in thought  
Journey, while motionless the body rests.  
When lo ! as, near upon the hour of dawn,  
Through the thick vapours Mars with fiery beam  
Glares down in west, over the ocean floor ;  
So seem'd, what once again I hope to view,  
A light, so swiftly coming through the sea,  
No winged course might equal its career.  
From which when for a space I had withdrawn  
Mine eyes, to make inquiry of my guide,  
Again I look'd, and saw it grown in size  
And brightness : then on either side appear'd  
Something, but what I knew not, of bright hue,  
And by degrees from underneath it came

<sup>1</sup> *Now had the sun.*] Dante was now antipodal to Jerusalem ; so that while the sun was setting with respect to that place, which he supposes to be the middle of the inhabited earth, to him it was rising. See Routh's *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, tom. iii. p. 256. <sup>2</sup> *The scales.*] The constellation *Libra*. <sup>3</sup> *When she reigns highest.*] "*Quando soverchia*" is (according to Venturi, whom I have followed) "when the autumnal equinox is passed." Lombardi supposes it to mean "when the nights begin to increase, that is, after the summer solstice."

Another. My preceptor silent yet  
Stood, while the brightness, that we first discern'd,  
Open'd the form of wings : then when he knew  
The pilot, cried aloud, " Down, down ; bend low  
Thy knees ; behold God's angel : fold thy hands :  
Now shalt thou see true ministers indeed.  
Lo ! how all human means he sets at nought ;  
So that nor oar he needs, nor other sail  
Except his wings, between such distant shores.  
Lo ! how straight up to heaven he holds them  
rear'd,

Winnowing the air with those eternal plumes,  
That not like mortal hairs fall off or change."

As more and more toward us came, more bright  
Appear'd the bird of God, nor could the eye  
Endure his splendour near : I mine bent down.  
He drove ashore in a small bark so swift  
And light, that in its course no wave it drank.  
The heavenly steersman at the prow was seen,  
Visibly written Blessed in his looks.  
Within, a hundred spirits and more there sat.

" In Exitu <sup>1</sup> Israel de Egypto,"

All with one voice together sang, with what  
In the remainder of that hymn is writ.  
Then soon as with the sign of holy cross  
He bless'd them, they at once leap'd out on land :  
He, swiftly as he came, return'd. The crew,  
There left, appear'd astounded with the place,  
Gazing around, as one who sees new sights.

From every side the sun darted his beams,  
And with his arrowy radiance from mid heaven  
Had chased the Capricorn, when that strange tribe,  
Lifting their eyes toward us : " If ye know,  
Declare what path will lead us to the mount."

Them Virgil answer'd : " Ye suppose, perchance,  
Us well acquainted with this place : but here,  
We, as yourselves, are strangers. Not long erst  
We came, before you but a little space,  
By other road so rough and hard, that now

<sup>1</sup> *In Exitu.*] " When Israel came out of Egypt." Ps. cxiv.

The ascent will seem to us as play." The spirits,  
 Who from my breathing had perceived I lived,  
 Grew pale with wonder. As the multitude  
 Flock round a herald sent with olive branch,  
 To hear what news he brings, and in their haste  
 Tread one another down; e'en so at sight  
 Of me those happy spirits were fix'd, each one  
 Forgetful of its errand to depart  
 Where, cleansed from sin, it might be made all fair.

Then one I saw darting before the rest  
 With such fond ardour to embrace me, I  
 To do the like was moved. O shadows vain!  
 Except in outward semblance: thrice my hands<sup>1</sup>  
 I clasp'd behind it, they as oft return'd  
 Empty into my breast again. Surprise  
 I need must think was painted in my looks,  
 For that the shadow smiled and backward drew.  
 To follow it I hasten'd, but with voice  
 Of sweetness it enjoin'd me to desist.  
 Then who it was I knew, and pray'd of it,  
 To talk with me it would a little pause.  
 'It answer'd: "Thee as in my mortal frame  
 I loved, so loosed from it I love thee still,  
 And therefore pause: but why walkest thou here?"

"Not without purpose once more to return,  
 Thou find'st me, my Casella,<sup>2</sup> where I am,<sup>3</sup>  
 Journeying this way"; I said: "but how of thee

<sup>1</sup> *Thrice my hands.*]

Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum,  
 Ter frustra comprehensa manus effugit imago;  
 Par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno.

Virg., *Æn.* ii. 794.

Compare Homer, *Od.* xi. 205.

<sup>2</sup> *My Casella.*] A Florentine, celebrated for his skill in music, "in whose company," says Landino, "Dante often recreated his spirits, wearied by severer studies." <sup>3</sup> *Where I am.*] "Là dove io son." Lombardi understands this differently: "Not without purpose to return again to the earth, where I am; that is, where I usually dwell." Editor's note: "Casella mio per tornare altra volta là dove son, fo io questo viaggio." Cary has not made this passage clear. Dante means that he has undertaken this journey in order to save his soul, so that, after death he may be numbered among the holy spirits in Purgatory. "My Casella, I make this journey in order to return another time here where I am."

Hath so much time been lost ? ” <sup>1</sup> He answer'd straight :

“ No outrage hath been done to me, if he, <sup>2</sup>  
Who when and whom he chooses takes, hath oft  
Denied me passage here ; since of just will  
His will he makes. These three months past <sup>3</sup>  
indeed,

He, whoso chose to enter, with free leave  
Hath taken ; whence I wandering by the shore <sup>4</sup>  
Where Tiber's wave grows salt, of him gain'd kind  
Admittance, at that river's mouth, toward which  
His wings are pointed ; for there always throng  
All such as not to Acheron descend.”

Then I : “ If new law taketh not from thee  
Memory or custom of love-tuned song,  
That whilom all my cares had power to 'swage ;  
Please thee therewith a little to console  
My spirit, that encumber'd with its frame,  
Travelling so far, of pain is overcome.”

“ Love, that discourses in my thoughts,” <sup>5</sup> he then  
Began in such soft accents, that within  
The sweetness thrills me yet. My gentle guide,  
And all who came with him, so well were pleased,

<sup>1</sup> *Hath so much time been lost.*] There is some uncertainty in this passage. If we read

Ma a te com' era tanta terra tolta ?  
with the Nidobeatina and Aldine editions, and many MSS., it signifies “ why art thou deprived of so desirable a region as that of Purgatory ? why dost thou not hasten to be cleansed of thy sins ? ” If with the Academicians della Crusca, we read,

Diss 'io, ma a te come tant' ora è tolta ?  
which is not destitute of authority to support it, and which has the advantage over the other, as it marks Dante's speech from Casella's, then it must mean as I have translated it, “ why hast thou lost so much time in arriving here ? ” Lombardi, who is for the former reading, supposes Casella to be just dead ; those, who prefer the latter, suppose him to have been dead some years, but now only just arrived. <sup>2</sup> *He.*] The conducting angel. <sup>3</sup> *These three months past.*] Since the time of the Jubilee, during which all spirits not condemned to eternal punishment were supposed to pass over to Purgatory as soon as they pleased. <sup>4</sup> *The shore.*] Ostia.

<sup>5</sup> “ *Love, that discourses in my thoughts.*”]

“ Amor che nella mente mi ragiona.”

The first verse of a canzone in the Convito of Dante, which he again cites in his treatise *De Vulg. Eloq.* lib. ii. cap. 6.

That seem'd nought else might in their thoughts have room.

Fast fix'd in mute attention to his notes  
We stood, when lo ! that old man venerable  
Exclaiming, " How is this, ye tardy spirits ?  
What negligence detains you loitering here ?  
Run to the mountain to cast off those scales,  
That from your eyes the sight of God conceal."

As a wild flock of pigeons, to their food  
Collected, blade or tares, without their pride  
Accustom'd, and in still and quiet sort,  
If aught alarm them, suddenly desert  
Their meal, assail'd by more important care ;  
So I that new-come troop beheld, the song  
Deserting, hasten to the mountain's side,  
As one who goes, yet, where he tends, knows not.  
Nor with less hurried step did we depart.

### CANTO III

#### ARGUMENT

Our Poet, perceiving no shadow except that cast by his own body, is fearful that Virgil has deserted him ; but he is freed from that error, and both arrive together at the foot of the mountain : on finding it too steep to climb, they inquire the way from a troop of spirits that are coming towards them, and are by them shown which is the easiest ascent. Manfredi, King of Naples, who is one of these spirits, bids Dante inform his daughter Costanza, Queen of Arragon, of the manner in which he had died.

THEM sudden flight had scatter'd o'er the plain,  
Turn'd towards the mountains, whither reason's voice  
Drives us : I, to my faithful company  
Adhering, left it not. For how, of him  
Deprived, might I have sped ? or who, beside,  
Would o'er the mountainous tract have led my steps ?  
He, with the bitter pang of self-remorse,  
Seem'd smitten. O clear conscience, and upright !  
How doth a little failing wound thee sore.



Soon as his feet desisted (slackening pace)  
 From haste, that mars all decency of act,  
 My mind, that in itself before was wrapt,  
 Its thought expanded, as with joy restored ;  
 And full against the steep ascent I set  
 My face, where highest <sup>1</sup> to heaven its top o'erflows.

The sun, that flared behind, with ruddy beam  
 Before my form was broken ; for in me  
 His rays resistance met. I turn'd aside  
 With fear of being left, when I beheld  
 Only before myself the ground obscured.  
 When thus my solace, turning him around,  
 Bespake me kindly : " Why distrustest thou ?  
 Believest not I am with thee, thy sure guide ?  
 It now is evening there, where buried lies  
 The body in which I cast a shade, removed  
 To Naples <sup>2</sup> from Brundusium's wall. Nor thou  
 Marvel, if before me no shadow fall,  
 More than that in the skyey element  
 One ray obstructs not other. To endure  
 Torments of heat and cold extreme, like frames  
 That virtue hath disposed, which, how it works,  
 Wills not to us, should be reveal'd. Insane,  
 Who hopes our reason may that space explore,  
 Which holds three persons in one substance knit.  
 Seek not the wherefore, race of human kind ;  
 Could ye have seen the whole, no need had been  
 For Mary to bring forth. Moreover, ye  
 Have seen such men desiring fruitlessly ; <sup>3</sup>  
 To whose desires, repose would have been given,  
 That now but serve them for eternal grief.  
 I speak of Plato, and the Stagirite,

<sup>1</sup> *Where highest.*] Lombardi proposes, with some hesitation, a different meaning from that which has hitherto been affixed to the words,

Che 'nverso 'l ciel più alto si dislaga ;  
 and would construe them, " that raises itself higher than every other mountain above the sea " : " sopra l'allagamento delle acque del mare." The conjecture is at least ingenious, and has obtained new force by the arguments of Monti in his *Prosposta*. <sup>2</sup> *To Naples.*] Virgil died at Brundisium, from whence his body is said to have been removed to Naples. <sup>3</sup> *Desiring fruitlessly.*] See *Inf.*, Canto iv. 39-

And others many more." And then he bent  
 Downwards his forehead, and in troubled mood <sup>1</sup>  
 Broke off his speech. Meanwhile we had arrived  
 Far as the mountain's foot, and there the rock  
 Found of so steep ascent, that nimblest steps  
 To climb it had been vain. The most remote,  
 Most wild, untrodden path, in all the tract  
 'Twixt Lerice and Turbia,<sup>2</sup> were to this  
 A ladder easy and open of access.

"Who knows on which hand now the steep declines,"  
 My master said, and paused; "so that he may  
 Ascend, who journeys without aid of wing?"  
 And while, with looks directed to the ground,  
 The meaning of the pathway <sup>3</sup> he explored,  
 And I gazed upward round the stony height;  
 On the left hand appear'd to us a troop  
 Of spirits, that toward us moved their steps;  
 Yet moving seem'd not, they so slow approach'd.

I thus my guide address'd: "Upraise thine eyes:  
 Lo! that way some, of whom thou mayst obtain  
 Counsel, if of thyself thou find'st it not."

Straightway he look'd, and with free speech replied:  
 "Let us tend thither: they but softly come.  
 And thou be firm in hope, my son beloved."

Now was that crowd from us distant as far  
 (When we some thousand steps, I say, had past),  
 As at a throw the nervous arm could fling;  
 When all drew backward on the massy crags  
 Of the steep bank, and firmly stood unmoved,  
 As one, who walks in doubt, might stand to look.

"O spirits perfect! O already chosen!"

Virgil to them began: "by that blest peace,

<sup>1</sup> *In troubled mood.*] Because he himself (Virgil) was amongst the number of spirits, who thus desired without hope. <sup>2</sup> *'Twixt Lerice and Turbia.*] At that time the two extremities of the Genoese republic; the former on the east, the latter on the west. <sup>3</sup> *The meaning of the pathway.*] Lombardi reads,

tenea 'l viso basso,

Esaminando del cammin la mente,  
 and explains it, "he bent down his face, his mind being occupied with considering their way to ascend the mountain." I doubt much whether the words can bear that construction.

Which, as I deem, is for you all prepared,  
Instruct us where the mountain low declines,  
So that attempt to mount it be not vain.  
For who knows most, him loss of time most grieves."

As sheep, that step from forth their fold, by one,  
Or pairs, or three at once ; meanwhile the rest  
Stand fearfully, bending the eye and nose  
To ground, and what the foremost does, that do  
The others, gathering round her if she stops,  
Simple and quiet, nor the cause discern ;  
So saw I moving to advance the first,  
Who of that fortunate crew were at the head,  
Of modest mien, and graceful in their gait.  
When they before me had beheld the light  
From my right side fall broken on the ground,  
So that the shadow reach'd the cave ; they stopp'd,  
And somewhat back retired : the same did all  
Who follow'd, though unweeting of the cause.

" Unask'd of you, yet freely I confess,  
This is a human body which ye see.  
That the sun's light is broken on the ground,  
Marvel not : but believe, that not without  
Virtue derived from Heaven, we to climb  
Over this wall aspire." So them bespake  
My master ; and that virtuous tribe rejoind'd :  
" Turn, and before you there the entrance lies " ;  
Making a signal to us with bent hands.

Then of them one began. " Whoe'er thou art,  
Who journey'st thus this way, thy visage turn ;  
Think if me elsewhere thou hast ever seen."

I towards him turn'd, and with fix'd eye beheld.  
Comely and fair, and gentle of aspect  
He seem'd, but on one brow a gash was mark'd.

When humbly I disclaim'd to have beheld  
Him ever : " Now behold ! " he said, and show'd  
High on his breast a wound : then smiling spake.

" I am Manfredi,<sup>1</sup> grandson to the Queen

<sup>1</sup> *Manfredi*.] King of Naples and Sicily, and the natural son of Frederick II. He was lively and agreeable in his manners, and delighted in poetry, music, and dancing. But he was luxurious and

Costanza : <sup>1</sup> whence I pray thee, when return'd,  
 To my fair daughter <sup>2</sup> go, the parent glad  
 Of Aragonia and Sicilia's pride ;  
 And of the truth inform her, if of me  
 Aught else be told. When by two mortal blows  
 My frame was shatter'd, I betook myself  
 Weeping to him, who of free will forgives.  
 My sins were horrible : but so wide arms  
 Hath goodness infinite, that it receives  
 All who turn to it. Had this text divine  
 Been of Cosenza's shepherd better scann'd,  
 Who then by Clement <sup>3</sup> on my hunt was set,  
 Yet at the bridge's head my bones had lain,

ambitious, void of religion, and in his philosophy an Epicurean. See G. Villani, lib. vi. cap. xlvii. and Mathias's Tiraboschi, vol. i. p. 99. He fell in the battle with Charles of Anjou in 1265, alluded to in Canto xxviii. of Inf., ver. 13, or rather in that which ensued in the course of a few days at Benevento. But the successes of Charles were so rapidly followed up, that our author, exact as he generally is, might not have thought it necessary to distinguish them in point of time ; for this seems the best method of reconciling some little apparent inconsistency between him and the annalist. "Dying excommunicated, King Charles did not allow of his being buried in sacred ground, but he was interred near the bridge of Benevento ; and on his grave there was cast a stone by every one of the army, whence there was formed a great mound of stones. But some have said, that afterwards, by command of the Pope, the Bishop of Cosenza took up his body and sent it out of the kingdom, because it was the land of the church ; and that it was buried by the river Verde, on the borders of the kingdom and of Campagna. This, however, we do not affirm." G. Villani, Hist. lib. vii. cap. ix. Manfredi and his father are spoken of by our Poet in his De Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. cap. 12, with singular commendation. "Siquidem illustres, &c." "Those illustrious worthies, Frederick the Emperor, and his well-born son Manfredi, manifested their nobility and uprightness of form, as long as fortune remained, by following pursuits worthy of men, and disdained those which are suited only to brutes. Such, therefore, as were of a lofty spirit, and graced with natural endowments, endeavoured to walk in the track which the majesty of such great princes had marked out for them : so that whatever was in their time attempted by eminent Italians, first made its appearance in the court of crowned sovereigns ; and because Sicily was a royal throne, it came to pass that whatever was produced in the vernacular tongue by our predecessors was called Sicilian ; which neither we nor our posterity shall be able to change."

<sup>1</sup> *Costanza.*] See Paradise, Canto iii. 121. <sup>2</sup> *My fair daughter.*] Costanza, the daughter of Manfredi, and wife of Peter III., King of Arragon, by whom she was mother to Frederick, King of Sicily, and James, King of Arragon. With the latter of these she was at Rome, 1296. See G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. xviii. and notes to Canto vii. <sup>3</sup> *Clement.*] Pope Clement iv.

Near Benevento, by the heavy mole  
 Protected ; but the rain now drenches them,  
 And the wind drives, out of the kingdom's bounds,  
 Far as the stream of Verde,<sup>1</sup> where, with lights  
 Extinguish'd, he removed them from their bed.  
 Yet by their curse we are not so destroy'd,  
 But that the eternal love may turn, while hope  
 Retains her verdant blossom. True it is,  
 That such one as in contumacy dies  
 Against the holy church, though he repent,  
 Must wander thirty-fold for all the time  
 In his presumption past : if such decree  
 Be not by prayers of good men shorter made.  
 Look therefore if thou canst advance my bliss ;  
 Revealing to my good Costanza, how  
 Thou hast beheld me, and beside, the terms  
 Laid on me of that interdict ; for here  
 By means of those below much profit comes."

## CANTO IV

## ARGUMENT

Dante and Virgil ascend the mountain of Purgatory, by a steep and narrow path pent in on each side by rock, till they reach a part of it that opens into a ledge or cornice. There seating themselves, and turning to the east, Dante wonders at seeing the sun on their left, the cause of which is explained to him by Virgil ; and while they continue their discourse, a voice addresses them, at which they turn, and find several spirits behind the rock, and amongst the rest one named Belacqua, who had been known to our Poet on earth, and who tells that he is doomed to linger there on account of his having delayed his repentance to the last.

WHEN by sensations of delight or pain,  
 That any of our faculties hath seized,  
 Entire the soul collects herself, it seems  
 She is intent upon that power alone ;

<sup>1</sup> *The stream of Verde.*] A river near Ascoli, that falls into the Tronto. The "extinguished lights" formed part of the ceremony at the interment of one excommunicated.

And thus the error is disproved, which holds  
 The soul not singly lighted in the breast.  
 And therefore whenas aught is heard or seen,  
 That firmly keeps the soul toward it turn'd,  
 Time passes, and a man perceives it not.  
 For that, whereby we hearken, is one power ;  
 Another that, which the whole spirit hath :  
 This is as it were bound, while that is free.

This found I true by proof, hearing that spirit,  
 And wondering ; for full fifty steps <sup>1</sup> aloft  
 The sun had measured, unobserved of me,  
 When we arrived where all with one accord  
 The spirits shouted, " Here is what ye ask."

A larger aperture oft-times is stopt,  
 With forked stake of thorn by villager,  
 When the ripe grape imbrown, than was the path,  
 By which my guide, and I behind him close,  
 Ascended solitary, when that troop  
 Departing left us. On Sanleo's <sup>2</sup> road  
 Who journeys, or to Noli <sup>3</sup> low descends,  
 Or mounts Bismantua's <sup>4</sup> height, must use his feet ;  
 But here a man had need to fly, I mean  
 With the swift wing <sup>5</sup> and plumes of high desire,  
 Conducted by his aid, who gave me hope,  
 And with light furnish'd to direct my way.

We through the broken rock ascended, close  
 Pent on each side, while underneath the ground  
 Ask'd help of hands and feet. When we arrived  
 Near on the highest ridge of the steep bank,  
 Where the plain level open'd, I exclaim'd,  
 " O Master ! say, which way can we proceed."

He answer'd, " Let no step of thine recede.  
 Behind me gain the mountain, till to us  
 Some practised guide appear." That eminence

<sup>1</sup> *Full fifty steps.*] Three hours and twenty minutes, fifteen degrees being reckoned to an hour. <sup>2</sup> *Sanleo.*] A fortress on the summit of Montefeltro. The situation is described by Troya, *Veltro Allegorico*, p. 11. It is a conspicuous object to travellers along the cornice on the riviera di Genoa. <sup>3</sup> *Noli.*] In the Genoese territory, between Finale and Savona. <sup>4</sup> *Bismantua.*] A steep mountain in the territory of Reggio. <sup>5</sup> *With the swift wing.*] Compare *Paradiso*, Canto xxxiii. 17.



Was lofty, that no eye might reach its point ;  
 And the side proudly rising, more than line <sup>1</sup>  
 From the mid quadrant to the centre drawn.  
 I, wearied, thus began : " Parent beloved !  
 Turn and behold how I remain alone ;  
 If thou stay not."—" My son ! " he straight replied,  
 " Thus far put forth thy strength " ; and to a track  
 Pointed, that, on this side projecting, round  
 Circles the hill. His words so spurr'd me on,  
 That I, behind him, clambering, forced myself,  
 Till my feet press'd the circuit plain beneath.  
 There both together seated, turn'd we round  
 To eastward, whence was our ascent : and oft  
 Many beside have with delight look'd back.

First on the nether shores I turn'd mine eyes,  
 Then raised them to the sun, and wondering mark'd  
 That from the left it smote us. Soon perceived  
 That poet sage, how at the car of light  
 Amazed <sup>2</sup> I stood, where 'twixt us and the north  
 Its course it enter'd. Whence he thus to me :  
 " Were Leda's offspring <sup>3</sup> now in company  
 Of that broad mirror, that high up and low  
 Imparts his light beneath, thou mightst behold  
 The ruddy Zodiac nearer to the Bears  
 Wheel, if its ancient course it not forsook.  
 How that may be, if thou wouldst think ; within  
 Pondering, imagine Sion with this mount  
 Placed on the earth, so that to both be one  
 Horizon, and two hemispheres apart,

<sup>1</sup> *More than line.*] It was much nearer to being perpendicular than horizontal. <sup>2</sup> *Amazed.*] He wonders that being turned to the east he should see the sun on his left, since in all the regions on this side of the tropic of Cancer it is seen on the right of one who turns his face towards the east ; not recollecting that he was now antipodal to Europe, from whence he had seen the sun taking an opposite course. <sup>3</sup> *Were Leda's offspring.*] " As the constellation of the Gemini is nearer the Bears than Aries is, it is certain that if the sun, instead of being in Aries, had been in Gemini, both the sun and that portion of the Zodiac made ' ruddy ' by the sun, would have been seen to ' wheel nearer to the Bears.' By the ' ruddy Zodiac ' must necessarily be understood that portion of the Zodiac affected or made red by the sun ; for the whole of the Zodiac never changes, nor appears to change, with respect to the remainder of the heavens." Lombardi.

Where lies the path<sup>1</sup> that Phaëton ill knew  
 To guide his erring chariot : thou wilt see<sup>2</sup>  
 How of necessity by this, on one,  
 He passes, while by that on the other side ;  
 If with that clear view thine intellect attend."

" Of truth, kind teacher ! " I exclaim'd, " so clear  
 Aught saw I never, as I now discern,  
 Where seem'd my ken to fail, that the mid orb<sup>3</sup>  
 Of the supernal motion (which in terms  
 Of art is call'd the Equator, and remains  
 Still 'twixt the sun and winter) for the cause  
 Thou hast assign'd, from hence toward the north  
 Departs, when those, who in the Hebrew land  
 Were dwellers, saw it towards the warmer part.  
 But if it please thee, I would gladly know,  
 How far we have to journey : for the hill  
 Mounts higher, than this sight of mine can mount."

He thus to me : " Such is this steep ascent,  
 That it is ever difficult at first,  
 But more a man proceeds, less evil grows.<sup>4</sup>  
 When pleasant it shall seem to thee, so much  
 That upward going shall be easy to thee  
 As in a vessel to go down the tide,  
 Then of this path thou wilt have reach'd the end.  
 There hope to rest thee from thy toil. No more  
 I answer, and thus far for certain know."  
 As he his words had spoken, near to us  
 A voice there sounded : " Yet ye first perchance  
 May to repose you by constraint be led."  
 At sound thereof each turn'd ; and on the left  
 A huge stone we beheld, of which nor I  
 Nor he before was ware. Thither we drew ;

<sup>1</sup> *The path.*] The ecliptic.    <sup>2</sup> *Thou wilt see.*] " If you consider that this mountain of Purgatory, and that of Sion, are antipodal to each other, you will perceive that the sun must rise on opposite sides of the respective eminences."    <sup>3</sup> *That the mid orb.*] " That the Equator (which is always situated between that part where, when the sun is, he causes summer, and the other where his absence produces winter) recedes from this mountain towards the north, at the time when the Jews inhabiting Mount Sion saw it depart towards the south." Lombardi.    <sup>4</sup> *But more a man proceeds, less evil grows.*] Because in ascending he gets rid of the weight of his sins.

And there were some, who in the shady place  
Behind the rock were standing, as a man  
Through idleness might stand. Among them one,  
Who seem'd to be much wearied, sat him down,  
And with his arms did fold his knees about,  
Holding his face between them downward bent.

"Sweet Sir!" I cried, "behold that man who  
shows

Himself more idle than if laziness  
Were sister to him." Straight he turn'd to us,  
And, o'er the thigh lifting his face, observed,  
Then in these accents spake: "Up then, proceed,  
Thou valiant one." Straight who it was I knew;  
Nor could the pain I felt (for want of breath  
Still somewhat urged me) hinder my approach.  
And when I came to him, he scarce his head  
Uplifted, saying, "Well hast thou discern'd,  
How from the left the sun his chariot leads."

His lazy acts and broken words my lips  
To laughter somewhat moved; when I began:  
"Belacqua,<sup>1</sup> now for thee I grieve no more.  
But tell, why thou art seated upright there.  
Waitest thou escort to conduct thee hence?  
Or blame I only thine accustom'd ways?"  
Then he: "My brother! of what use to mount,  
When, to my suffering, would not let me pass  
The bird of God,<sup>2</sup> who at the portal sits?  
Behoves so long that heaven first bear me round  
Without its limits, as in life it bore;  
Because I, to the end, repentant sighs  
Delay'd; if prayer do not aid me first,  
That riseth up from heart which lives in grace.  
What other kind avails, not heard in heaven?"

<sup>1</sup> *Belacqua.*] Concerning this man, the commentators afford no information, except that in the margin of the Monte Cassino MS. there is found this brief notice of him: "Iste Belacqua fuit optimus magister cithararum, et leutorum, et pigrissimus homo in operibus mundi sicut in operibus animæ." "This Belacqua was an excellent master of the harp and lute, but very negligent in his affairs both spiritual and temporal." Lettera di Eustazio Dicercheo ad Angelio Sidicino, 4to, Roma, 1801. <sup>2</sup> *The bird of God.*] Here are two other readings, "Uscier" and "Angel," "Usher" and "Angel" of God.

Before me now the poet, up the mount  
Ascending, cried : " Haste thee : for see the sun  
Has touch'd the point meridian ; and the night  
Now covers with her foot Marocco's shore."

## CANTO V

## ARGUMENT

They meet with others, who had deferred their repentance till they were overtaken by a violent death, when sufficient space being allowed them, they were then saved ; and amongst these, Giacompo del Cassero, Buonconte da Montefeltro, and Pia, a lady of Siena.

Now had I left those spirits, and pursued  
The steps of my conductor ; when behind,  
Pointing the finger at me, one exclaim'd :  
" See, how it seems as if the light not shone  
From the left hand <sup>1</sup> of him beneath,<sup>2</sup> and he,  
As living, seems to be led on." Mine eyes  
I at that sound reverting, saw them gaze,  
Through wonder, first at me ; and then at me  
And the light broken underneath, by turns.  
" Why are thy thoughts thus riveted," my guide  
Exclaim'd, " that thou hast slack'd thy pace ? or how  
Imports it thee, what thing is whisper'd here ?  
Come after me, and to their babblings leave  
The crowd. Be as a tower, that, firmly set,  
Shakes not its top for any blast that blows.  
He, in whose bosom thought on thought shoots out,  
Still of his aim is wide, in that the one  
Sicklies and wastes to nought the other's strength."

What other could I answer, save " I come " ?

<sup>1</sup> ——— *It seems as if the light not shone*

*From the left hand.*] The sun was, therefore, on the right of our travellers. For, as before, when seated and looking to the east from whence they had ascended, the sun was on their left ; so now that they have risen and are again going forward, it must be on the opposite side of them. <sup>2</sup> *Of him beneath.*] Of Dante, who was following Virgil up the mountain, and therefore was the lower of the two.

I said it, somewhat with that colour tinged,  
Which oft-times pardon meriteth for man.

Meanwhile traverse along the hill there came,  
A little way before us, some who sang  
The "Miserere" in responsive strains.  
When they perceived that through my body I  
Gave way not for the rays to pass, their song  
Straight to a long and hoarse exclaim they changed ;  
And two of them, in guise of messengers,  
Ran on to meet us, and inquiring ask'd :  
" Of your condition we would gladly learn."

To them my guide. " Ye may return, and bear  
Tidings to them who sent you, that his frame  
Is real flesh. If, as I deem, to view  
His shade they paused, enough is answer'd them :  
Him let them honour : they may prize him well."

Ne'er saw I fiery vapours with such speed  
Cut through the serene air at fall of night,  
Nor August's clouds, athwart the setting sun  
That upward these did not in shorter space  
Return ; and, there arriving, with the rest  
Wheel back on us, as with loose rein a troop.

" Many," exclaim'd the bard, " are these, who  
throng

Around us : to petition thee, they come.  
Go therefore on, and listen as thou go'st."

" O spirit ! who go'st on to blessedness,  
With the same limbs that clad thee at thy birth,"  
Shouting they came : " a little rest thy step.  
Look if thou any one amongst our tribe  
Hast e'er beheld, that tidings of him there <sup>1</sup>  
Thou mayst report. Ah, wherefore go'st thou on ?  
Ah, wherefore tarriest thou not ? We all  
By violence died, and to our latest hour  
Were sinners, but then warn'd by light from  
heaven ;

So that, repenting and forgiving, we  
Did issue out of life at peace with God,  
Who, with desire to see Him, fills our heart."

<sup>1</sup> *There.*] Upon the earth.

Then I: "The visages of all I scan,  
Yet none of ye remember. But if aught  
That I can do may please you, gentle spirits!  
Speak, and I will perform it; by that peace,  
Which, on the steps of guide so excellent  
Following, from world to world, intent I seek."

In answer he began: "None here distrusts  
Thy kindness, though not promised with an oath;  
So as the will fail not for want of power.  
Whence I, who sole before the others speak,  
Entreat thee, if thou ever see that land<sup>1</sup>  
Which lies between Romagna and the realm  
Of Charles, that of thy courtesy thou pray  
Those who inhabit Fano, that for me  
Their adorations duly be put up,  
By which I may purge off my grievous sins.  
From thence I came.<sup>2</sup> But the deep passages,  
Whence issued out the blood<sup>3</sup> wherein I dwelt,  
Upon my bosom in Antenor's land<sup>4</sup>  
Were made, where to be more secure I thought.  
The author of the deed was Este's prince,  
Who, more than right could warrant, with his  
wrath

Pursued me. Had I towards Mira fled,  
When overta'en at Oriaco, still  
Might I have breathed. But to the marsh I sped;  
And in the mire and rushes tangled there  
Fell, and beheld my life-blood float the plain."

Then said another: "Ah! so may the wish,  
That takes thee o'er the mountain, be fulfill'd,  
As thou shalt graciously give aid to mine.

<sup>1</sup> *That land.*] The Marca d'Ancona, between Romagna and Apulia, the kingdom of Charles of Anjou. <sup>2</sup> *From thence I came.*] Giacompo del Cassero, a citizen of Fano, who having spoken ill of Azzo da Este, Marquis of Ferrara, was by his orders put to death. Giacompo was overtaken by the assassins at Oriaco, a place near the Brenta, from whence if he had fled towards Mira, higher up on that river, instead of making for the marsh on the sea-shore, he might have escaped. <sup>3</sup> *The blood.*] Supposed to be the seat of life. <sup>4</sup> *Antenor's land.*] The city of Padua, said to be founded by Antenor. This implies a reflection on the Paduans. See Inf., xxxii. 89. Thus G. Villani calls the Venetians "the perfidious descendants from the blood of Antenor, the betrayer of his country, Troy." Lib. xi. cap. lxxxix.



Of Montefeltro I; <sup>1</sup> Buonconte I:

Giovanna <sup>2</sup> nor none else have care for me;

Sorrowing with these I therefore go." I thus:

"From Campaldino's field what force or chance  
Drew thee, that ne'er thy sepulture was known?"

"Oh!" answer'd he, "at Casentino's foot  
A stream there courseth, named Archiano, sprung  
In Apennine above the hermit's seat.<sup>3</sup>

E'en where its name is cancel'd,<sup>4</sup> there came I,  
Pierced in the throat, fleeing away on foot,  
And bloodying the plain. Here sight and speech  
Fail'd me; and, finishing with Mary's name,  
I fell, and tenantless my flesh remain'd.

I will report the truth; which thou again

Tell to the living. Me God's angel took,<sup>5</sup>

Whilst he of hell exclaim'd: 'O thou from heaven:

'Say wherefore hast thou robb'd me? Thou of him

'The eternal portion bear'st with thee away,

'For one poor tear<sup>6</sup> that he deprives me of.

'But of the other, other rule I make.'

"Thou know'st how in the atmosphere collects

That vapour dank, returning into water

Soon as it mounts where cold condenses it.

That evil will,<sup>7</sup> which in his intellect

Still follows evil, came; and raised the wind

And smoky mist, by virtue of the power

<sup>1</sup> *Of Montefeltro I.*] Buonconte (son of Guido da Montefeltro, whom we have had in the twenty-seventh Canto of Inf.) fell in the battle of Campaldino (1289), fighting on the side of the Aretini. In this engagement our Poet took a distinguished part, as we have seen related in his Life. See Fazio degli Uberti, Dittamondo, lib. ii. cap. xxix.

<sup>2</sup> *Giovanna.*] Either the wife, or a kinswoman of Buonconte.

<sup>3</sup> *The hermit's seat.*] The hermitage of Camaldoli.

<sup>4</sup> *Where its name is cancel'd.*] That is, between Bibbiena and Poppi, where the Archiano falls into the Arno.

<sup>5</sup> *Me God's angel took.*] Cum autem finem vitæ explesset servus Dei aspiciens vidit diabolum simul et Angelum ad animam stantem ac unum quemque illam sibi tollere festinantem. Alberici, Visio, § 18.

<sup>6</sup> *For one poor tear.*] Visum est quod angelus Domini lachrimas quas dives ille — fuderat in ampulla teneret. Alberici, Visio, § 18.

<sup>7</sup> *That evil will.*] The devil. Lombardi refers us to Albertus Magnus de Potentia Dæmonum. This notion of the evil spirit having power over the elements, appears to have risen from his being termed the "prince of the air," in the New Testament.

Given by his nature. Thence the valley, soon  
 As day was spent, he cover'd o'er with cloud,  
 From Pratomagno to the mountain range,<sup>1</sup>  
 And stretch'd the sky above ; so that the air  
 Impregnate changed to water. Fell the rain ;  
 And to the fosses came all that the land  
 Contain'd not ; and, as mightiest streams are wont.  
 To the great river, with such headlong sweep,  
 Rush'd, that nought stay'd its course. My stiffen'd  
 frame

Laid at his mouth, the fell Archiano found,  
 And dash'd it into Arno ; from my breast  
 Loosening the cross, that of myself I made  
 When overcome with pain. He hurl'd me on,  
 Along the banks and bottom of his course ;  
 Then in his muddy spoils encircling wrapt."

" Ah ! when thou to the world shalt be return'd,  
 And rested after thy long road," so spake  
 Next the third spirit ; " then remember me.  
 I once was Pia.<sup>2</sup> Siena gave me life ;  
 Maremma took it from me. That he knows,  
 Who me with jewel'd ring had first espoused."

<sup>1</sup> *From Pratomagno to the mountain range.*] From Pratomagno, now called Prato Vecchio (which divides the Valdarno from Casentino), as far as to the Apennine. <sup>2</sup> *Pia.*] She is said to have been a Sienese lady, of the family of Tolomei, secretly made away with by her husband Nello della Pietra of the same city, in the Maremma, where he had some possessions.

## CANTO VI

## ARGUMENT

Many besides, who are in like case with those spoken of in the last Canto, beseech our Poet to obtain for them the prayers of their friends, when he shall be returned to this world. This moves him to express a doubt to his guide, how the dead can be profited by the prayers of the living; for the solution of which doubt he is referred to Beatrice. Afterwards he meets with Sordello the Mantuan, whose affection, shown to Virgil his countryman, leads Dante to break forth into an invective against the unnatural divisions with which Italy, and more especially Florence, was distracted.

WHEN from their game of dice men separate,  
 He who hath lost remains in sadness fix'd,  
 Revolving in his mind <sup>1</sup> what luckless throws  
 He cast: but, meanwhile, all the company  
 Go with the other; one before him runs,  
 And one behind his mantle twitches, one  
 Fast by his side bids him remember him.  
 He stops not; and each one, to whom his hand  
 Is stretch'd, well knows he bids him stand aside;  
 And thus <sup>2</sup> he from the press defends himself.  
 E'en such was I in that close-crowding throng;  
 And turning so my face around to all,  
 And promising, I 'scaped from it with pains.  
 Here of Arezzo him <sup>3</sup> I saw, who fell

<sup>1</sup> *Revolving in his mind.*] ———— *Riman dolente*

*Ripetendo le volte, e triste imparà.*

Lombardi explains this: "that the loser remains by himself, and taking up the dice casts them over again, as if to learn how he may throw the numbers he could wish to come up." There is something very natural in this; but whether the sense can be fairly deduced from the words, is another question. <sup>2</sup> *And thus.*] Archdeacon Fisher pointed out to me a passage in the *Novela de la Gitanilla* of Cervantes, ed. Valentia, 1797, p. 12, from which it appears that it was usual for money to be given to bystanders at play by winners; and as he well remarked: "Dante is therefore describing, with his usual power of observation, what he had often seen, the shuffling, boon-denying exit of the successful gamester." <sup>3</sup> *Of Arezzo him.*] Benincasa of Arezzo, eminent for his skill in jurisprudence, who having condemned to death Turrino da Turrita, brother of Ghino di Tacco, for his robberies in the Maremma, was murdered by Ghino, in an apartment of his own house, in the presence of many witnesses. Ghino was not only suffered to escape in safety, but (as the commentators inform us) obtained so high a reputa-

By Ghino's cruel arm ; and him beside,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who in his chase was swallow'd by the stream.  
 Here Frederic Novello,<sup>2</sup> with his hand  
 Stretch'd forth, entreated ; and of Pisa he,<sup>3</sup>  
 Who put the good Marzucco to such proof  
 Of constancy. Count Orso<sup>4</sup> I beheld ;  
 And from its frame a soul dismiss'd for spite  
 And envy, as it said, but for no crime ;  
 I speak of Peter de la Brosse :<sup>5</sup> and here,  
 While she yet lives, that Lady of Brabant,  
 Let her beware ; lest for so false a deed  
 She herd with worse than these. When I was freed  
 From all those spirits, who pray'd for others'  
     prayers  
 To hasten on their state of blessedness ;  
 Straight I began : " O thou, my luminary !

tion by the liberality with which he was accustomed to dispense the fruits of his plunder, and treated those who fell into his hands with so much courtesy, that he was afterwards invited to Rome, and knighted by Boniface VIII. A story is told of him by Boccaccio, G. x. N. 2.

<sup>1</sup> *Him beside.*] Cione, or Ciacco de' Tarlati of Arezzo. He is said to have been carried by his horse into the Arno, and there drowned, while he was in pursuit of certain of his enemies. <sup>2</sup> *Frederic Novello.*]

Son of the Conte Guido da Battifolle, and slain by one of the family of Bostoli. <sup>3</sup> *Of Pisa he.*]

Farinata de' Scornigiani of Pisa. His father Marzucco, who had entered the order of the Frati Minori, so entirely overcame the feelings of resentment, that he even kissed the hands of the slayer of his son, and, as he was following the funeral, exhorted his kinsmen to reconciliation. The eighteenth and thirtieth in the collection of Guittone d'Arezzo's Letters are addressed to Marzucco. The latter is in verse. <sup>4</sup> *Count Orso.*]

Son of Napoleone da Cerbaia, slain by Alberto da Mangona, his uncle. <sup>5</sup> *Peter*

*de la Brosse.*] Secretary of Phillip III. of France. The courtiers, envying the high place which he held in the king's favour, prevailed on Mary of Brabant to charge him falsely with an attempt upon her person ; for which supposed crime he suffered death. So say the Italian commentators. Henault represents the matter very differently : " Pierre de la Brosse, formerly barber to St. Louis, afterwards the favourite of Philip, fearing the too great attachment of the king for his wife Mary, accuses this princess of having poisoned Louis, eldest son of Philip, by his first marriage. This calumny is discovered by a nun of Nivelles in Flanders. La Brosse is hung." Abregé Chron. 1275, &c. The Deputati, or those deputed to write annotations on the Decameron, suppose that Boccaccio, in the Giornata ii. Novella 9, took the story from this passage in Dante, only concealing the real names and changing the incidents in some parts, in order not to wound the feelings of those whom, as it was believed, these incidents had so lately befallen. Ediz. Giunti, 1575, p. 40.

It seems expressly in thy text <sup>1</sup> denied,  
 That heaven's supreme decree can ever bend  
 To supplication ; yet with this design  
 Do these entreat. Can then their hope be vain ?  
 Or is thy saying not to me reveal'd ? "

He thus to me : " Both what I write is plain,  
 And these deceived not in their hope ; if well  
 Thy mind consider, that the sacred height  
 Of judgment doth not stoop, because love's flame  
 In a short moment all fulfils, which he  
 Who sojourns here, in right should satisfy.  
 Besides, when I this point concluded thus,  
 By praying no defect could be supplied ;  
 Because the prayer had none access to God.  
 Yet in this deep suspicion rest thou not  
 Contented, unless she assure thee so,  
 Who betwixt truth and mind infuses light :  
 I know not if thou take me right ; I mean  
 Beatrice. Her thou shalt behold above,<sup>2</sup>  
 Upon this mountain's crown, fair seat of joy."

Then I : " Sir ! let us mend our speed ; for now  
 I tire not as before : and lo ! the hill <sup>3</sup>  
 Stretches its shadow far." He answer'd thus :  
 " Our progress with this day shall be as much  
 As we may now dispatch ; but otherwise  
 Than thou supposest is the truth. For there  
 Thou canst not be, ere thou once more behold  
 Him back returning, who behind the steep  
 Is now so hidden, that, as erst, his beam  
 Thou dost not break. But lo ! a spirit there  
 Stands solitary, and toward us looks :  
 It will instruct us in the speediest way."

We soon approach'd it. O thou Lombard spirit !  
 How didst thou stand, in high abstracted mood,  
 Scarce moving with slow dignity thine eyes.  
 It spoke not aught, but let us onward pass,

<sup>1</sup> *In thy text.*] He refers to Virgil, *Æn.* lib. vi. 376.

*Desine fata deum flecti sperare precando.*

<sup>2</sup> *Above.*] See Purgatorio, c. xxx. v. 32. <sup>3</sup> *The hill.*] It was now  
 past the noon.

Eyeing us as a lion on his watch.  
 But Virgil, with entreaty mild, advanced,  
 Requesting it to show the best ascent.  
 It answer to his question none return'd ;  
 But of our country and our kind of life  
 Demanded. When my courteous guide began,  
 " Mantua," the shadow, in itself absorb'd,<sup>1</sup>  
 Rose towards us from the place in which it stood,  
 And cried, " Mantuan ! I am thy countryman,  
 Sordello." <sup>2</sup> Each the other then embraced.  
 Ah, slavish Italy ! thou inn of grief !  
 Vessel without a pilot in loud storm !  
 Lady no longer of fair provinces,  
 But brothel-house impure ! this gentle spirit,  
 Even from the pleasant sound of his dear land  
 Was prompt to greet a fellow citizen

<sup>1</sup> *The shadow, in itself absorb'd.*] I had before translated "The solitary shadow"; and have made the alteration in consequence of Monti's just remark on the original, that *tutta in se romita* does not mean "solitary," but "collected, concentrated in itself." See his *Proposta* under "Romito." Vellutello had shown him the way to this interpretation, when he explained the words by *tutta in se raccolta e sola.* <sup>2</sup> *Sordello.*] The history of Sordello's life is wrapt in the obscurity of romance. That he distinguished himself by his skill in Provençal poetry is certain; and many feats of military prowess have been attributed to him. It is probable that he was born towards the end of the twelfth, and died about the middle of the succeeding century. Tiraboschi, who terms him the most illustrious of all the Provençal poets of his age, has taken much pains to sift all the notices he could collect relating to him, and has particularly exposed the fabulous narrative which Platina has introduced on this subject in his history of Mantua. Honourable mention of his name is made by our Poet in the treatise *De Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. cap. 15*, where it is said that, remarkable as he was for eloquence, he deserted the vernacular language of his own country, not only in his poems, but in every other kind of writing. Tiraboschi had at first concluded him to be the same writer whom Dante elsewhere (*De Vulg. Eloq. lib. ii. c. 13*) calls *Gottus Mantuanus*, but afterwards gave up that opinion to the authority of the *Conte d'Arco* and the *Abate Bettinelli*. By *Bastero*, in his *Crusca Provenzale*, ediz. Roma, 1724, p. 94, amongst Sordello's MS. poems in the Vatican are mentioned "*Canzoni, Tenzoni, Cobbole,*" and various "*Serventesi,*" particularly one in the form of a funeral song on the death of *Blancas*, in which the poet reprehends all the reigning princes in Christendom. This last was well suited to attract the notice of our author. Mention of Sordello will recur in the notes to the *Paradiso*, c. ix. v. 32. After this note was written, many of Sordello's poems were brought to light by the industry of M. Raynouard in his *Choix des Poésies des Troubadours* and his *Lexique Roman*.



With such glad cheer : while now thy living ones  
 In thee abide not without war ; and one  
 Malicious gnaws another ; ay, of those  
 Whom the same wall and the same moat contains.  
 Seek, wretched one ! around thy sea-coasts wide ;  
 Then homeward to thy bosom turn ; and mark,  
 If any part of thee sweet peace enjoy.  
 What boots it, that thy reins Justinian's hand <sup>1</sup>  
 Refitted, if thy saddle be unprest ?  
 Nought doth he now but aggravate thy shame.  
 Ah, people ! thou obedient still shouldst live,  
 And in the saddle let thy Cæsar sit,  
 If well thou marked'st that which God commands.<sup>2</sup>  
 Look how that beast to felness hath relapsed,  
 From having lost correction of the spur,  
 Since to the bridle thou hast set thine hand,  
 O German Albert ! <sup>3</sup> who abandon'st her  
 That is grown savage and unmanageable,  
 When thou shouldst clasp her flanks with forked heels.  
 Just judgment from the stars fall on thy blood ;  
 And be it strange and manifest to all ;  
 Such as may strike thy successor <sup>4</sup> with dread ;  
 For that thy sire <sup>5</sup> and thou have suffer'd thus,  
 Through greediness of yonder realms detain'd,  
 The garden of the empire to run waste.  
 Come, see the Capulets and Montagues,<sup>6</sup>  
 The Filippeschi and Monaldi,<sup>7</sup> man  
 Who carest for nought ! those sunk in grief, and these

<sup>1</sup> *Justinian's hand.*] "What avails it that Justinian delivered thee from the Goths and reformed thy laws, if thou art no longer under the control of his successors in the empire ?"

<sup>2</sup> *That which God commands.*] He alludes to the precept—"Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's." <sup>3</sup> *O German Albert !*] The Emperor Albert I. succeeded Adolph in 1298 and was murdered in 1308. See Par. Canto xix. 114.

<sup>4</sup> *Thy successor.*] The successor of Albert was Henry of Luxemburg, by whose interposition in the affairs of Italy our Poet hoped to have been reinstated in his native city.

<sup>5</sup> *Thy sire.*] The Emperor Rudolph, too intent on increasing his power in Germany to give much of his thoughts to Italy, "the garden of the empire."

<sup>6</sup> *Capulets and Montagues.*] Our ears are so familiarised to the names of these rival houses in the language of Shakespeare, that I have used them instead of the "Montecchi" and "Cappelletti." They were two powerful Ghibelline families of Verona.

<sup>7</sup> *Filippeschi and Monaldi.*] Two other rival families in Orvieto.

With dire suspicion rack'd. Come, cruel one !  
 Come, and behold the oppression of the nobles,  
 And mark their injuries ; and thou mayst see  
 What safety Santafiore can supply.<sup>1</sup>  
 Come and behold thy Rome,<sup>2</sup> who calls on thee,  
 Desolate widow, day and night with moans,  
 " My Cæsar, why dost thou desert my side ? "  
 Come, and behold what love among thy people :  
 And if no pity touches thee for us,  
 Come, and blush for thine own report. For me,  
 If it be lawful, O Almighty Power !  
 Who wast in earth for our sakes crucified,  
 Are thy just eyes turn'd elsewhere ? or is this  
 A preparation, in the wondrous depth  
 Of thy sage counsel made, for some good end,  
 Entirely from our reach of thought cut off ?  
 So are the Italian cities all o'erthrong'd  
 With tyrants, and a great Marcellus<sup>3</sup> made  
 Of every petty factious villager.

My Florence ! thou mayst well remain unmoved  
 At this digression, which affects not thee :  
 Thanks to thy people, who so wisely speed.  
 Many have justice in their heart, that long  
 Waiteth for counsel to direct the bow,  
 Or ere it dart unto its aim : but thine  
 Have it on their lip's edge. Many refuse  
 To bear the common burdens : readier thine  
 Answer uncall'd, and cry, " Behold I stoop ! "

Make thyself glad, for thou hast reason now,

<sup>1</sup> *What safety Santafiore can supply.*] A place between Pisa and Siena. What he alludes to is so doubtful, that it is not certain whether we should not read " come si cura "—" How Santafiore is governed." Perhaps the event related in the note to v. 58, Canto xi. may be pointed at. <sup>2</sup> *Come and behold thy Rome.*] Thus in the Latin Epistle to the Cardinals, which has been discovered in the Laurentian library, and has every appearance of being Dante's: " Romam urbem, nunc utroque lumine destitutam, nunc Hannibali nedum aliis miserandam, solam sedentem et viduam, prout superius proclamatur, qualis est, pro modulo nostræ imaginis, ante mortales oculos affigatis omnes." *Opere minori di Dante*, tom. iii. P<sup>te</sup>. ii. p. 270, 12c Fir. 1840.

<sup>3</sup> *Marcellus.*]

—————Un Marcel diventa

Ogni villan che parteggiando viene.

He probably means the Marcellus who opposed Julius Cæsar.

Thou wealthy ! thou at peace ! thou wisdom-fraught !  
 Facts best will witness if I speak the truth.  
 Athens and Lacedæmon, who of old  
 Enacted laws, for civil arts renown'd,  
 Made little progress in improving life  
 Towards thee, who usest such nice subtlety,  
 That to the middle of November scarce  
 Reaches the thread thou in October weavest.  
 How many times within thy memory,  
 Customs, and laws, and coins, and offices  
 Have been by thee renew'd, and people changed.

If thou remember'st well and canst see clear,  
 Thou wilt perceive thyself like a sick wretch,  
 Who finds no rest upon her down, but oft  
 Shifting her side, short respite seeks from pain.

## CANTO VII

### ARGUMENT

The approach of night hindering further ascent, Sordello conducts our Poets apart to an eminence, from whence they behold a pleasant recess, in form of a flowery valley, scooped out of the mountain ; where are many famous spirits, and among them the Emperor Rodolph, Ottocar, King of Bohemia, Philip III. of France, Henry of Navarre, Peter III. of Arragon, Charles I. of Naples, Henry III. of England, and William, Marquis of Montferrat.

AFTER their courteous greetings joyfully  
 Seven times exchanged, Sordello backward drew  
 Exclaiming, " Who are ye ? "—" Before this mount  
 By spirits worthy of ascent to God  
 Was sought, my bones had by Octavius' care  
 Been buried. I am Virgil ; for no sin  
 Deprived of heaven, except for lack of faith."  
 So answer'd him in few my gentle guide.

As one, who aught before him suddenly  
 Beholding, whence his wonder riseth, cries,  
 " It is, yet is not," wavering in belief ;  
 Such he appear'd ; then downward bent his eyes,  
 And, drawing near with reverential step,

Caught him, where one of mean estate might clasp  
His lord. "Glory of Latium!" he exclaim'd,  
"In whom our tongue its utmost power display'd;  
Boast of my honour'd birth-place! what desert  
Of mine, what favour, rather, undeserved,  
Shows thee to me? If I to hear that voice  
Am worthy, say if from below thou comest,  
And from what cloister's pale?"—"Through every orb  
Of that sad region," he replied, "thus far  
Am I arrived, by heavenly influence led:  
And with such aid I come. Not for my doing,  
But for not doing, have I lost the sight  
Of that high Sun, whom thou desireth, and who  
By me too late was known. There is a place  
There underneath, not made by torments sad,  
But by dun shades alone; where mourning's voice  
Sounds not of anguish sharp, but breathes in sighs.  
There I with little innocents abide,  
Who by death's fangs were bitten, ere exempt  
From human taint. There I with those abide,  
Who the three holy virtues<sup>1</sup> put not on,  
But understood the rest,<sup>2</sup> and without blame  
Follow'd them all. But, if thou know'st, and canst,  
Direct us how we soonest may arrive,  
Where Purgatory its true beginning takes."

He answer'd thus: "We have no certain place  
Assign'd us: upwards I may go, or round.  
Far as I can, I join thee for thy guide.  
But thou beholdest now how day declines;  
And upwards to proceed by night, our power  
Excels: therefore it may be well to choose  
A place of pleasant sojourn. To the right  
Some spirits sit apart retired. If thou  
Consentest, I to these will lead thy steps:  
And thou wilt know them, not without delight."

"How chances this?" was answer'd: "whoso wish'd  
To ascend by night, would he be thence debarr'd  
By other, or through his own weakness fail?"

<sup>1</sup> *The three holy virtues.*] Faith, Hope, and Charity.      <sup>2</sup> *The rest.*] Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance.

The good Sordello then, along the ground  
 Trailing his finger, spoke : " Only this line  
 Thou shalt not overpass, soon as the sun  
 Hath disappear'd ; not that aught else impedes  
 Thy going upwards, save the shades of night.  
 These, with the want of power, perplex the will.  
 With them thou haply mightst return beneath,  
 Or to and fro around the mountain's side  
 Wander, while day is in the horizon shut."

My master straight, as wondering at his speech,  
 Exclaim'd : " Then lead us quickly, where thou sayst  
 That, while we stay, we may enjoy delight."

A little space we were removed from thence,  
 When I perceived the mountain hollow'd out,  
 Even as large valleys <sup>1</sup> hollow'd out on earth.

" That way," the escorting spirit cried, " we go,  
 Where in a bosom the high bank recedes :  
 And there await renewal of the day."

Betwixt the steep and plain, a crooked path  
 Led us traverse into the ridge's side,  
 Where more than half the sloping edge expires.  
 Refulgent gold, and silver thrice refined,  
 And scarlet grain and ceruse, Indian wood <sup>2</sup>  
 Of lucid dye serene, fresh emeralds  
 But newly broken, by the herbs and flowers  
 Placed in that fair recess, in colour all  
 Had been surpass'd, as great surpasses less.  
 Nor nature only there lavish'd her hues,  
 But of the sweetness of a thousand smells  
 A rare and undistinguish'd fragrance made.

" *Salve Regina*," <sup>3</sup> on the grass and flowers,  
 Here chanting, I beheld those spirits sit,

<sup>1</sup> *As large valleys.*] *Viatores enim per viam rectam dum ambulant, campum juxta viam cernentes spatiosum et pulchrum, oblique itineris, dicunt intra se, Iter per campum istum faciamus, &c. Alberici, Visio, § 28.* <sup>2</sup> *Indian wood.*] *Indico legno lucido e sereno.* It is a little uncertain what is meant by this. Indigo, although it is extracted from a herb, seems the most likely. Monti in his *Proposta* maintains it to be ebony. <sup>3</sup> *Salve Regina.*] The beginning of a hymn to the Virgin. It is sufficient here to observe, that in similar instances I shall either preserve the original Latin words or translate them, as it may seem best to suit the purpose of the verse.

Who not beyond the valley could be seen.

“Before the westering sun sink to his bed,”  
 Began the Mantuan, who our steps had turn’d,  
 “Mid those, desire not that I lead ye on.  
 For from this eminence ye shall discern  
 Better the acts and visages of all,  
 Than, in the nether vale, among them mix’d.  
 He, who sits high above the rest, and seems  
 To have neglected that he should have done,  
 And to the others’ song moves not his lip,  
 The Emperor Rudolph<sup>1</sup> call, who might have heal’d  
 The wounds whereof fair Italy hath died,  
 So that by others she revives but slowly.  
 He, who with kindly visage comforts him,  
 Sway’d in that country,<sup>2</sup> where the water springs,  
 That Moldaw’s river to the Elbe, and Elbe  
 Rolls to the ocean: Ottocar<sup>3</sup> his name:  
 Who in his swaddling clothes was of more worth  
 Than Wincellaus his son, a bearded man,  
 Pamper’d with rank luxuriousness and ease.  
 And that one with the nose deprest,<sup>4</sup> who close  
 In counsel seems with him of gentle look,<sup>5</sup>  
 Flying expired, withering the lily’s flower.  
 Look there, how he doth knock against his breast.  
 The other ye behold, who for his cheek  
 Makes of one hand a couch, with frequent sighs.  
 They are the father and the father-in-law  
 Of Gallia’s bane: <sup>6</sup> his vicious life they know

<sup>1</sup> *The Emperor Rudolph.*] See the last Canto, v. 104. He died in 1291. <sup>2</sup> *That country.*] Bohemia. <sup>3</sup> *Ottocar.*] King of Bohemia, who was killed in the battle of Marchfield, fought with Rudolph, August 26, 1278. Wincellaus II. his son, who succeeded him in the kingdom of Bohemia, died in 1305. The latter is again taxed with luxury in the Paradiso, xix. 123. <sup>4</sup> *That one with the nose deprest.*] Philip III. of France, father of Philip IV. He died in 1285, at Perpignan, in his retreat from Arragon. <sup>5</sup> *Him of gentle look.*] Henry of Navarre, father of Jane, married to Philip IV. of France, whom Dante calls “mal di Francia”—“Gallia’s bane.” <sup>6</sup> *Gallia’s bane.*] G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. cxlvi., speaks with equal resentment of Philip IV. “In 1291, on the night of the calends of May, Philip le Bel, King of France, by advice of Biccio and Musciatto Franzesi, ordered all the Italians, who were in his country and realm, to be seized, under pretence of seizing the money-lenders, but thus he caused the good merchants also to be seized and ransomed; for which he was



And foul; thence comes the grief that rends them thus.

He, so robust of limb,<sup>1</sup> who measure keeps  
In song with him of feature prominent,<sup>2</sup>  
With every virtue bore his girdle braced.  
And if that stripling,<sup>3</sup> who behind him sits,  
King after him had lived, his virtue then  
From vessel to like vessel had been pour'd;  
Which may not of the other heirs be said.  
By James and Frederick<sup>4</sup> his realms are held;  
Neither the better heritage obtains.  
Rarely into the branches of the tree  
Doth human worth mount up: and so ordains  
He who bestows it, that as his free gift  
It may be call'd. To Charles<sup>5</sup> my words apply  
No less than to his brother in the song;  
Which Pouille and Provence now with grief confess.  
So much that plant degenerates from its seed,

much blamed and held in great abhorrence. And from thenceforth the realm of France fell evermore into degradation and decline. And it is observable, that between the taking of Acre and this seizure in France, the merchants of Florence received great damage and ruin of their property."

<sup>1</sup> *He, so robust of limb.*] Peter III. called the Great, King of Arragon, who died in 1285, leaving four sons, Alonzo, James, Frederick, and Peter. The two former succeeded him in the kingdom of Arragon, and Frederick in that of Sicily. See G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. cii., and Mariana, lib. xiv. cap. 9. He is enumerated among the Provençal poets by Millot, Hist. Litt. des Troubadours, tom. iii. p. 150. <sup>2</sup> *Him of feature prominent.*] "Dal maschio naso"—"with the masculine nose." Charles I., King of Naples, Count of Anjou, and brother of St. Louis. He died in 1284. The annalist of Florence remarks, that "there had been no sovereign of the house of France, since the time of Charlemagne, by whom Charles was surpassed either in military renown and prowess, or in the loftiness of his understanding." G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. xciv. We shall, however, find many of his actions severely reprobated in the twentieth Canto. <sup>3</sup> *That stripling.*] Either (as the old commentators suppose) Alonzo III., King of Arragon, the eldest son of Peter III., who died in 1291, at the age of twenty-seven; or, according to Venturi, Peter the youngest son. The former was a young prince of virtue sufficient to have justified the eulogium and the hopes of Dante. See Mariana, lib. xiv. cap. 14. <sup>4</sup> *By James and Frederick.*] See note to Canto iii. 112. Compare Homer, Od. b. ii. v. 276. Pindar, Nem. xi. 48, and Euripides, Electra, 369. <sup>5</sup> *To Charles.*] "Al Nasuto"—"Charles II., King of Naples, is no less inferior to his father Charles I. than James and Frederick to theirs, Peter III." See Canto xx. 78, and Paradiso, Canto xix. 125.

As, more than Beatrix and Margaret,  
Costanza <sup>1</sup> still boasts of her valorous spouse.

“Behold the king of simple life and plain,  
Harry of England,<sup>2</sup> sitting there alone :  
He through his branches better issue <sup>3</sup> spreads.  
“That one, who, on the ground, beneath the rest,  
Sits lowest, yet his gaze directs aloft,  
Is William, that brave Marquis,<sup>4</sup> for whose cause,  
The deed of Alexandria and his war  
Makes Montferrat and Canavese weep.”

## CANTO VIII

### ARGUMENT

Two angels, with flaming swords broken at the points, descend to keep watch over the valley, into which Virgil and Dante entering by desire of Sordello, our Poet meets with joy the spirit of Nino, the judge of Gallura, one who was well known to him. Meantime three exceedingly bright stars appear near the pole, and a serpent creeps subtly into the valley, but flees at hearing the approach of those angelic guards. Lastly, Conrad Malaspina predicts to our Poet his future banishment.

Now was the hour that wakens fond desire  
In men at sea, and melts their thoughtful heart  
Who in the morn have bid sweet friends farewell,

<sup>1</sup> *Costanza*.] Widow of Peter III. She has already been mentioned in the third Canto, v. 112. By Beatrix and Margaret are probably meant two of the daughters of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence; the latter married to St. Louis of France, the former to his brother Charles of Anjou, King of Naples. See *Paradiso*, Canto vi. 135. Dante therefore considers Peter as the most illustrious of the three monarchs.

<sup>2</sup> *Harry of England*.] Henry III. The contemporary annalist speaks of this king in similar terms. G. Villani, lib. v. cap. iv. “From Richard was born Henry, who reigned after him, who was a plain man and of good faith, but of little courage.”

<sup>3</sup> *Better issue*.] Edward I., of whose glory our Poet was perhaps a witness, in his visit to England. “From the said Henry was born the good King Edward, who reigns in our times, who has done great things, whereof we shall make mention in due place.” G. Villani, *ibid*.

<sup>4</sup> *William, that brave Marquis*.] William, Marquis of Montferrat, was treacherously seized by his own subjects, at Alessandria in Lombardy, A.D. 1290, and ended his life in prison. See G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. cxxxv. A war ensued between the people of Alessandria and those of Montferrat and the Canavese.

And pilgrim newly on his road with love  
Thrills, if he hear the vesper bell from far,  
That seems to mourn for the expiring day.  
When I, no longer taking heed to hear,  
Began, with wonder, from those spirits to mark  
One risen from its seat, which with its hand  
Audience implored. Both palms it join'd and raised,  
Fixing its stedfast gaze toward the east,  
As telling God, "I care for nought beside."

"Te Lucis Ante,<sup>1</sup> so devoutly then  
Came from its lip, and in so soft a strain,  
That all my sense<sup>2</sup> in ravishment was lost.  
And the rest after, softly and devout,  
Follow'd through all the hymn, with upward gaze  
Directed to the bright supernal wheels.

Here, reader!<sup>3</sup> for the truth make thine eyes keen:  
For of so subtle texture is this veil,  
That thou with ease mayst pass it through unmark'd.  
I saw that gentle band silently next

<sup>1</sup> *Te Lucis Ante.*] "Te lucis ante terminum," says Lombardi, is the first verse of the hymn sung by the church in the last part of the sacred office termed *compieta*, a service which our Chaucer calls "complin."

<sup>2</sup> *All my sense.*] *Fece me a me uscir di mente.*

*Me surpuerat mihi. Horat., Carm. lib. iv. od. 13.*

<sup>3</sup> *Here, reader!*] Lombardi's explanation of this passage, by which the commentators have been much perplexed, though it may be thought rather too subtle and fine-spun, like the veil itself spoken of in the text, cannot be denied the praise of extraordinary ingenuity. "This admonition of the poet to his reader," he observes, "seems to relate to what has been before said that these spirits sung the whole of the hymn 'Te lucis ante terminum' throughout, even that second strophe of it—

*Procul recedant somnia, Hostemque nostrum comprime,  
Et noctium phantasmata, Ne polluantur corpora;*  
and he must imply, that these souls, being incorporeal, did not offer up this petition on their own account, but on ours, who are yet in this world; as he afterwards makes those other spirits, who repeat the Pater Noster, expressly declare, when after that prayer they add,

This last petition, dearest Lord! is made  
Not for ourselves, &c. Canto xi.

As, therefore, if we look through a very fine veil, the sight easily passes on, without perceiving it, to objects that lie on the other side; so here the poet fears that our mind's eye may insensibly pass on to contemplate these spirits, as if they were praying for the relief of their own wants; without discovering the veil of our wants, with which they invest themselves in the act of offering up this prayer."

Look up, as if in expectation held,  
 Pale and in lowly guise ; and, from on high,  
 I saw, forth issuing descend beneath,  
 Two angels, with two flame-illumined swords,  
 Broken and mutilated of their points.  
 Green as the tender leaves but newly born,  
 Their vesture was, the which, by wings as green  
 Beaten, they drew behind them, fann'd in air.  
 A little over us one took his stand ;  
 The other lighted on the opposing hill ;  
 So that the troop were in the midst contain'd.

Well I descried the whiteness on their heads ;  
 But in their visages the dazzled eye  
 Was lost, as faculty that by too much  
 Is overpower'd. " From Mary's bosom both  
 Are come," exclaim'd Sordello, " as a guard  
 Over the vale, 'gainst him, who hither tends,  
 The serpent." Whence, not knowing by which path  
 He came, I turn'd me round ; and closely press'd,  
 All frozen, to my leader's trusted side.

Sordello paused not : " To the valley now  
 (For it is time) let us descend ; and hold  
 Converse with those great shadows : haply much  
 Their sight may please ye." Only three steps down  
 Methinks I measured, ere I was beneath,  
 And noted one who look'd as with desire  
 To know me. Time was now that air grew dim ;  
 Yet not so dim, that, 'twixt his eyes and mine,  
 It clear'd not up what was conceal'd before.  
 Mutually towards each other we advanced.  
 Nino, thou courteous judge ! <sup>1</sup> what joy I felt,  
 When I perceived thou wert not with the bad.

No salutation kind on either part  
 Was left unsaid. He then inquired : " How long  
 Since thou arriv'd'st at the mountain's foot,  
 Over the distant waves ? "—" Oh ! " answer'd I,  
 " Through the sad seats of woe this morn I came ;

<sup>1</sup> *Nino, thou courteous judge.*] Nino di Gallura de' Visconti, nephew to Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi, and betrayed by him. See notes to *Inferno*, Canto xxxiii.

And still in my first life, thus journeying on,  
 The other strive to gain." Soon as they heard  
 My words, he and Sordello backward drew,  
 As suddenly amazed. To Virgil one,  
 The other to a spirit turn'd, who near  
 Was seated, crying: "Conrad!<sup>1</sup> up with speed:  
 Come, see what of His grace high God hath will'd."  
 Then turning round to me: "By that rare mark  
 Of honour, which thou owest to him, who hides  
 So deeply His first cause, it hath no ford;  
 When thou shalt be beyond the vast of waves,  
 Tell my Giovanna,<sup>2</sup> that for me she call  
 There, where reply to innocence is made.  
 Her mother,<sup>3</sup> I believe, loves me no more;  
 Since she has changed the white and wimpled folds<sup>4</sup>  
 Which she is doom'd once more with grief to wish.  
 By her it easily may be perceived,  
 How long in woman lasts the flame of love,  
 If sight and touch do not relume it oft.  
 For her so fair a burial will not make  
 The viper,<sup>5</sup> which calls Milan to the field,  
 As had been made by shrill Gallura's bird."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Conrad.*] Currado, father to Marcello Malaspina. <sup>2</sup> *My Giovanna.*] The daughter of Nino, and wife of Riccardo da Camino of Trevigi, concerning whom see Paradiso, c. ix. 48. <sup>3</sup> *Her mother.*] Beatrice, Marchioness of Este, wife of Nino, and after his death married to Galeazzo de' Visconti of Milan. It is remarked by Lombardi, that the time which Dante assigns to this journey, and consequently to this colloquy with Nino Visconti, the beginning, that is, of April, is prior to the time which Bernardino Corio, in his History of Milan, part the second, fixes for the nuptials of Beatrice with Galeazzo; for he records her having been betrothed to that prince after the May of this year (1300), and her having been solemnly espoused at Modena on the 29th of June. Besides, however, the greater credit due to Dante, on account of his having lived at the time when these events happened, another circumstance in his favour is the discrepancy remarked by Giovambatista Giralaldi (Commentator. delle cose di Ferrara) in those writers by whom the history of Beatrice's life has been recorded. Nothing can set the general accuracy of our Poet, as to historical facts, in a stronger point of view, than the difficulty there is in convicting him of even so slight a deviation from it as is here suspected. <sup>4</sup> *The white and wimpled folds.*] The weeds of widowhood. <sup>5</sup> *The viper.*] The arms of Galeazzo and the ensign of the Milanese. <sup>6</sup> *Shrill Gallura's bird.*] The cock was the ensign of Gallura, Nino's province in Sardinia. Inf., xxii. 80, and notes. It is not known whether Beatrice had any further cause to regret

He spoke, and in his visage took the stamp  
Of that right zeal, which with due temperature  
Glows in the bosom. My insatiate eyes  
Meanwhile to heaven had travell'd, even there  
Where the bright stars are slowest, as a wheel  
Nearest the axle ; when my guide inquired :

“ What there aloft, my son, has caught thy gaze ? ”

I answered : “ The three torches,<sup>1</sup> with which here  
The pole is all on fire.” He then to me :

“ The four resplendent stars, thou saw'st this morn,  
Are there beneath ; and these, risen in their stead.”

While yet he spoke, Sordello to himself  
Drew him, and cried : “ Lo there our enemy ! ”  
And with his hand pointed that way to look.

Along the side, where barrier none arose  
Around the little vale, a serpent lay,  
Such haply as gave Eve the bitter food.  
Between the grass and flowers, the evil snake  
Came on, reverting oft his lifted head ;  
And, as a beast that smooths its polish'd coat,  
Licking his back. I saw not, nor can tell,  
How those celestial falcons from their seat  
Moved, but in motion each one well descried.  
Hearing the air cut by their verdant plumes,  
The serpent fled ; and, to their stations, back  
The angels up return'd with equal flight.

The spirit (who to Nino, when he call'd,  
Had come), from viewing me with fixed ken,  
Through all that conflict, loosen'd not his sight.

“ So may the lamp,<sup>2</sup> which leads thee up on high,  
Find, in thy resolve, of wax so much,

her nuptials with Galeazzo, than a certain shame which appears, however unreasonably, to have attached to a second marriage.

<sup>1</sup> *The three torches.*] The three evangelical virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity. These are supposed to rise in the evening, in order to denote their belonging to the contemplative ; as the four others, which are made to rise in the morning, were probably intended to signify that the cardinal virtues belong to the active life : or perhaps it may mark the succession, in order of time, of the Gospel to the heathen system of morality. <sup>2</sup> *May the lamp.*] “ May the divine grace find so hearty a co-operation on the part of thy own will, as shall enable thee to ascend to the terrestrial paradise, which is on the top of this mountain.”



As may suffice thee to the enamel'd height,"  
 It thus began : " If any certain news  
 Of Valdimagra <sup>1</sup> and the neighbour part  
 Thou know'st, tell me, who once was mighty there.  
 They call'd me Conrad Malaspina ; not  
 That old one ; <sup>2</sup> but from him I sprang. The love  
 I bore my people is now here refined."

" In your domains," I answer'd, " ne'er was I.  
 But, through all Europe, where do those men dwell,  
 To whom their glory is not manifest ?  
 The fame, that honours your illustrious house,  
 Proclaims the nobles, and proclaims the land ;  
 So that he knows it, who was never there.  
 I swear to you, so may my upward route  
 Prosper, your honour'd nation not impairs  
 The value of her coffer and her sword.  
 Nature and use give her such privilege,  
 That while the world is twisted from his course  
 By a bad head, she only walks aright,  
 And has the evil way in scorn." He then :  
 " Now pass thee on : seven times the tired sun <sup>3</sup>  
 Revisits not the couch, which with four feet  
 The forked Aries covers, ere that kind  
 Opinion shall be nail'd into thy brain  
 With stronger nails than other's speech can drive ;  
 If the sure course of judgment be not stay'd."

<sup>1</sup> *Valdimagra*.] See *Inf.*, Canto xxiv. 144, and notes. <sup>2</sup> *That old one*.] An ancestor of Conrad Malaspina, who was also of that name. <sup>3</sup> *Seven times the tired sun*.] "The sun shall not enter into the constellation of Aries seven times more, before thou shalt have still better cause for the good opinion thou expressest of Valdimagra, in the kind reception thou shalt there meet with." Dante was hospitably received by the Marchese Marcello, or Morello Malaspina, during his banishment, A.D. 1307.

## CANTO IX

## ARGUMENT

Dante is carried up the mountain, asleep and dreaming, by Lucia; and, on wakening, finds himself, two hours after sunrise, with Virgil, near the gate of Purgatory, through which they are admitted by the angel deputed by Saint Peter to keep it.

Now the fair consort of Tithonus old,<sup>1</sup>  
 Arisen from her mate's beloved arms,  
 Look'd palely o'er the eastern cliff; her brow,  
 Lucent with jewels, glitter'd, set in sign  
 Of that chill animal,<sup>2</sup> who with his train  
 Smites fearful nations: and where then we were,  
 Two steps of her ascent the night had past;  
 And now the third was closing up its wing,<sup>3</sup>  
 When I, who had so much of Adam with me,  
 Sank down upon the grass, o'ercome with sleep,  
 There where all five<sup>4</sup> were seated. In that hour,  
 When near the dawn the swallow her sad lay,

<sup>1</sup> *Now the fair consort of Tithonus old.*] La concubina di Titone antico. Venturi, after some of the old commentators, interprets this to mean an aurora, or dawn of the moon; but this seems highly improbable. From what follows it may be conjectured, that our Poet intends us to understand that it was now near the break of day.  
<sup>2</sup> *Of that chill animal.*] The scorpion. <sup>3</sup> *The third was closing up its wing.*] The night being divided into four watches, I think he may mean that the third was past, and the fourth and last was begun, so that there might be some faint glimmering of morning twilight; and not merely, as Lombardi supposes, that the third watch was drawing towards its close, which would still leave an insurmountable difficulty in the first verse. At the beginning of Canto xv. our Poet makes the evening commence three hours before sunset, and he may now consider the dawn as beginning at the same distance from sunrise. Those who would have the dawn, spoken of in the first verse of the present Canto, to signify the rising of the moon, construe the "two steps of her ascent which the night had past," into as many hours, and not watches; so as to make it now about the third hour of the night. The old Latin annotator on the Monte Cassino MS. alone, as far as I know, supposing the division made by St. Isidore (Orig. lib. 5) of the night into seven parts to be adopted by our Poet, concludes that it was the third of these; and he too, therefore, is for the lunar dawn. Rosa Morando ingenuously confesses, that to him the whole passage is "non esplicabile o almeno difficillimo," inexplicable, or, at best, extremely difficult. <sup>4</sup> *All five.*] Virgil, Dante, Sordello, Nino, and Currado Malaspina.

Remembering haply ancient grief,<sup>1</sup> renews ;  
And when our minds, more wanderers from the flesh,  
And less by thought restrain'd, are, as 't were, full  
Of holy divination in their dreams ;  
Then, in a vision, did I seem to view  
A golden-feather'd eagle in the sky,  
With open wings, and hovering for descent ;  
And I was in that place, methought, from whence  
Young Ganymede, from his associates 'reft,  
Was snatch'd aloft to the high consistory.  
" Perhaps," thought I within me, " here alone  
He strikes his quarry, and elsewhere disdains  
To pounce upon the prey." Therewith, it seem'd,  
A little wheeling in his æry tour,  
Terrible as the lightning, rush'd he down,  
And snatch'd me upward even to the fire.  
There both, I thought, the eagle and myself  
Did burn ; and so intense the imagined flames,  
That needs my sleep was broken off. As erst  
Achilles shook himself, and round him roll'd  
His waken'd eyeballs, wondering where he was,  
Whenas his mother had from Chiron fled  
To Scyros, with him sleeping in her arms  
(There whence the Greeks did after sunder him) ;  
E'en thus I shook me, soon as from my face  
The slumber parted, turning deadly pale,  
Like one ice-struck with dread. Sole at my side  
My comfort stood : and the bright sun was now  
More than two hours aloft : and to the sea  
My looks were turn'd. " Fear not," my master cried,  
" Assured we are at happy point. Thy strength  
Shrink not, but rise dilated. Thou art come  
To Purgatory now. Lo ! there the cliff  
That circling bounds it. Lo ! the entrance there,  
Where it doth seem parted. Ere the dawn  
Usher'd the day-light, when thy wearied soul  
Slept in thee, o'er the flowery vale beneath

<sup>1</sup> *Remembering haply ancient grief.*] Progne having been changed into a swallow after the outrage done her by Tereus. See Ovid, *Metam.* lib. vi.

A lady came, and thus bespake me : ‘ I  
 ‘ Am Lucia.<sup>1</sup> Suffer me to take this man,  
 ‘ Who slumbers. Easier so his way shall speed.’  
 Sordello and the other gentle shapes  
 Tarrying, she bare thee up : and, as day shone,  
 This summit reach’d : and I pursued her steps.  
 Here did she place thee. First, her lovely eyes  
 That open entrance show’d me ; then at once  
 She vanish’d with thy sleep.” Like one, whose doubts  
 Are chased by certainty, and terror turn’d  
 To comfort on discovery of the truth,  
 Such was the change in me : and as my guide  
 Beheld me fearless, up along the cliff  
 He moved, and I behind him, towards the height.

Reader ! thou markest how my theme doth rise ;  
 Nor wonder therefore, if more artfully  
 \* I prop the structure. Nearer now we drew,  
 Arrived whence, in that part, where first a breach  
 As of a wall appear’d, I could descry  
 A portal, and three steps beneath, that led  
 For inlet there, of different colour each ;  
 And one who watch’d, but spake not yet a word.  
 As more and more mine eye did stretch its view,  
 I mark’d him seated on the highest step,  
 In visage such, as past my power to bear.  
 Grasp’d in his hand, a naked sword glanced back  
 The rays so towards me, that I oft in vain  
 My sight directed. “ Speak, from whence ye stand ” ;  
 He cried : “ What would ye ? Where is your escort ?  
 Take heed your coming upward harm ye not.”

“ A heavenly dame, not skillless of these things,”  
 Replied the instructor, “ told us, even now,  
 ‘ Pass that way : here the gate is.’ ”—“ And may she,  
 Befriending, prosper your ascent,” resumed  
 The courteous keeper of the gate : “ Come then  
 Before our steps.” We straightway thither came.

The lowest stair <sup>2</sup> was marble white, so smooth

<sup>1</sup> Lucia.] See Inf., c. ii. 97, and Paradiso, c. xxxii. 123. <sup>2</sup> The lowest stair.] By the white step is meant the distinctness with which the conscience of the penitent reflects his offences ; by the

And polish'd, that therein my mirror'd form  
 Distinct I saw. The next of hue more dark  
 Than sablest grain, a rough and singed block,  
 Crack'd lengthwise and across. The third, that lay  
 Massy above, seem'd porphyry, that flamed  
 Red as the life-blood spouting from a vein.  
 On this God's angel either foot sustain'd,  
 Upon the threshold seated, which appear'd  
 A rock of diamond. Up the trinal steps  
 My leader cheerly drew me. "Ask," said he,  
 "With humble heart, that he unbar the bolt."

Piously at his holy feet devolved  
 I cast me, praying him for pity's sake  
 That he would open to me; but first fell  
 Thrice on my bosom prostrate.<sup>1</sup> Seven times<sup>2</sup>  
 The letter, that denotes the inward stain,  
 He, on my forehead, with the blunted point  
 Of his drawn sword, inscribed. And "Look," he  
 cried,

"When enter'd, that thou wash these scars away."

Ashes, or earth ta'en dry out of the ground,  
 Were of one colour with the robe he wore.  
 From underneath that vestment forth he drew  
 Two keys, of metal twain: the one was gold,  
 Its fellow silver. With the pallid first,  
 And next the burnish'd, he so ply'd the gate,  
 As to content me well. "Whenever one  
 Faileth of these, that in the key-hole straight  
 It turn not, to this alley then expect  
 Access in vain." Such were the words he spake.  
 "One is more precious: <sup>3</sup> but the other needs,

burnt and cracked one, his contrition on their account; and by that  
 of porphyry, the fervour with which he resolves on the future pursuit  
 of piety and virtue.

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: "Ma pria nel petto tre fiate mi diedi." Dante  
 means: "But first I struck my breast three times," like a penitent  
 saying the Confiteor before beginning his Confession. <sup>2</sup> *Seven times.*  
 Seven P's, to denote the seven sins (Peccata) of which he was to be  
 cleansed in his passage through Purgatory. <sup>3</sup> *One is more precious.*  
 The golden key denotes the divine authority by which the priest absolves  
 the sinners: the silver expresses the learning and judgment requisite  
 for the due discharge of that office.

Skill and sagacity, large share of each,  
 Ere its good task to disengage the knot  
 Be worthily perform'd. From Peter these  
 I hold, of him instructed that I err  
 Rather in opening, than in keeping fast ;  
 So but the suppliant at my feet implore."

Then of that hallow'd gate he thrust the door,  
 Exclaiming, " Enter, but this warning hear :  
 He forth again departs who looks behind."

As in the hinges of that sacred ward  
 The swivels turn'd, sonorous metal strong,  
 Harsh was the grating, nor so surlily  
 Roar'd the Tarpeian,<sup>1</sup> when by force bereft  
 Of good Metellus, thenceforth from his loss  
 To leanness doom'd. Attentively, I turn'd,  
 Listening the thunder that first issued forth ;  
 And " We praise thee, O God," methought I heard,  
 In accents blended with sweet melody.  
 The strains came o'er mine ear, e'en as the sound  
 Of choral voices, that in solemn chant  
 With organ mingle, and, now high and clear  
 Come swelling, now float indistinct away.

<sup>1</sup> *The Tarpeian.*]

Protinus abducto patuerunt templa Metello,  
 Tunc rupes Tarpeia sonat : magnoque reclusas  
 Testatur stridore fores : tunc conditus imo  
 Eruiat templo multis intactus ab annis  
 Romani census populi, &c. Lucan, Phars. lib. iii. 157.

The tribune with unwilling steps withdrew,  
 While impious hands the rude assault renew ;  
 The brazen gates with thundering strokes resound,  
 And the Tarpeian mountain rings around.  
 At length the sacred storehouse, open laid,  
 The hoarded wealth of ages past displayed.

Rowe.



## CANTO X

## ARGUMENT

Being admitted at the gate of Purgatory, our Poets ascend a winding path up the rock, till they reach an open and level space that extends each way round the mountain. On the side that rises, and which is of white marble, are seen artfully engraven many stories of humility, which whilst they are contemplating, there approach the souls of those who expiate the sin of pride, and who are bent down beneath the weight of heavy stones.

WHEN we had past the threshold of the gate,  
 (Which the soul's ill affection doth disuse,  
 Making the crooked seem the straighter path,)  
 I heard its closing sound. Had mine eyes turn'd,  
 For that offence what plea might have avail'd ?

We mounted up the riven rock, that wound  
 On either side alternate, as the wave  
 Flies and advances. "Here some little art  
 Behoves us," said my leader, "that our steps  
 Observe the varying flexure of the path."

Thus we so slowly sped, that with cleft orb  
 The moon once more o'erhangs her watery couch,  
 Ere we that strait have threaded. But when free,  
 We came, and open, where the mount above  
 One solid mass retires ; I spent with toil,  
 And both uncertain of the way, we stood,  
 Upon a plain more lonesome than the roads  
 That traverse desert wilds. From whence the brink  
 Borders upon vacuity, to foot  
 Of the steep bank that rises still, the space  
 Had measured thrice the stature of a man :  
 And, distant as mine eye could wing its flight,  
 To leftward now and now to right dispatch'd,  
 That cornice equal in extent appear'd.

Not yet our feet had on that summit moved,  
 When I discover'd that the bank, around,  
 Whose proud uprising all ascent denied,  
 Was marble white ; and so exactly wrought  
 With quaintest sculpture, that not there alone  
 Had Polycletus, but e'en nature's self

Been shamed. The angel (who came down to earth  
 With tidings of the peace so many years  
 Wept for in vain, that oped the heavenly gates  
 From their long interdict) before us seem'd,  
 In a sweet act, so sculptured to the life,  
 He look'd no silent image. One had sworn  
 He had said "Hail!" for she was imaged there.  
 By whom the key did open to God's love;  
 And in her act as sensibly imprest  
 That word, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord,"  
 As figure seal'd on wax. "Fix not thy mind  
 On one place only," said the guide beloved,  
 Who had me near him on that part where lies  
 The heart of man. My sight forthwith I turn'd,  
 And mark'd, behind the virgin mother's form,  
 Upon that side where he that moved me stood,  
 Another story graven on the rock.

I past athwart the bard, and drew me near,  
 That it might stand more aptly for my view.  
 There, in the self-same marble, were engraved  
 The cart and kine, drawing the sacred ark,  
 That from unbidden office awes mankind.<sup>1</sup>  
 Before it came much people; and the whole  
 Parted in seven quires. One sense cried "Nay,"  
 Another, "Yes, they sing." Like doubt arose  
 Betwixt the eye and smell, from the curl'd fume  
 Of incense breathing up the well-wrought toil.  
 Preceding<sup>2</sup> the blest vessel, onward came  
 With light dance leaping, girt in humble guise,  
 Israel's sweet harper: in that hap he seem'd  
 Less, and yet more, than kingly. Opposite,  
 At a great palace, from the lattice forth  
 Look'd Michol, like a lady full of scorn  
 And sorrow. To behold the tablet next,

<sup>1</sup> *That from unbidden office awes mankind.*] "And when they came to Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it." "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God." 2 Sam. vi. 7.  
<sup>2</sup> *Preceding.*] "And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod." 2 Sam vi. 14.

Which, at the back of Michol, whitely shone,  
 I moved me. There, was storied on the rock  
 The exalted glory of the Roman prince,  
 Whose mighty worth moved Gregory <sup>1</sup> to earn  
 His mighty conquest, Trajan the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>  
 A widow at his bridle stood, attired  
 In tears and mourning. Round about them troop'd  
 Full throng of knights; and overhead in gold  
 The eagles floated,<sup>3</sup> struggling with the wind.  
 The wretch appear'd amid all these to say:  
 "Grant vengeance, Sire! for, woe beshrew this heart,  
 My son is murder'd." He replying seem'd:  
 "Wait now till I return." And she, as one  
 Made hasty by her grief: "O Sire! if thou  
 Dost not return?"—"Where I am, who then is,  
 May right thee."—"What to thee is other's good,  
 If thou neglect thy own?"—"Now comfort thee";  
 At length he answers. "It bescemeth well  
 My duty be perform'd, ere I move hence:  
 So justice wills; and pity bids me stay."

He, whose ken nothing new survcys, produced  
 That visible speaking, new to us and strange,  
 The like not found on earth. Fondly I gazed  
 Upon those patterns of meek humbleness,  
 Shapes yet more precious for their artist's sake;  
 When "Lo!" the poet whisper'd, "where this way

<sup>1</sup> *Gregory.*] St. Gregory's prayers are said to have delivered Trajan from hell. See *Paradiso*, Canto xx. 40. <sup>2</sup> *Trajan the Emperor.*] For this story, Landino refers to two writers, whom he calls "Helinando," of France, by whom he means Elinand, a monk and chronicler, in the reign of Philip Augustus, and "Polycrato," of England, by whom is meant John of Salisbury, author of the *Polycraticus de Curialium Nugis*, in the twelfth century. The passage in the text I find nearly a translation from that work, lib. v. c. 8. The original appears to be in Dio Cassius, where it is told of the Emperor Hadrian, lib. lxix. ἀμείλις γυναικίς, κ.τ.λ. "when a woman appeared to him with a suit, as he was on a journey, at first he answered her, 'I have no leisure'; but she crying out to him, 'then reign no longer,' he turned about, and heard her cause." Lombardi refers also to Johannes Diaconus, Vita S. Gregor. lib. ii. cap. 44; the *Euchology* of the Greeks, cap. 96; and St. Thomas Aquinas, *Supplem. Quæst.* 73, art. 5 ad 5. <sup>3</sup> *The eagles floated.*] See Perticari's Letter on this passage. *Opere*, vol. iii. p. 552. ed. Bol. 1823. The eagles were of metal; not worked on a standard, as Villani supposed.

(But slack their pace) a multitude advance.  
These to the lofty steps shall guide us on."

Mine eyes, though bent on view of novel sights,  
Their loved allurement, were not slow to turn.

Reader ! I would not that amazed thou miss  
Of thy good purpose, hearing how just God  
Decrees our debts be cancel'd. Ponder not  
The form of suffering. Think on what succeeds :  
Think that, at worst, beyond the mighty doom <sup>1</sup>  
It cannot pass. " Instructor ! " I began,  
" What I see hither tending, bears no trace  
Of human semblance, nor of aught beside  
That my foil'd sight can guess." He answering thus :  
" So croub'd to earth, beneath their heavy terms  
Of torment stoop they, that mine eye at first  
Struggled as thine. But look intently thither ;  
And disentangle with thy labouring view,  
What, underneath those stones, approacheth : now,  
E'en now, mayst thou discern the pangs of each." <sup>2</sup>

Christians and proud ! O poor and wretched ones !  
That, feeble in the mind's eye, lean your trust  
Upon unsteadfast perverseness : know ye not  
That we are worms, yet made at last to form  
The winged insect, <sup>3</sup> imp'd with angel plumes,  
That to Heaven's justice unobstructed soars ?  
Why buoy ye up aloft your unfledged souls ?  
Abortive <sup>4</sup> then and shapeless ye remain,

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: *The mighty doom.*] "La gran sentenza." The Last Judgment. <sup>2</sup> Editor's note: *The pangs of each.*] "Come ciascun si picchia" should be translated "how each one beats his breast." This is the second time Cary has failed to recognise this very Catholic sign of contrition. <sup>3</sup> *The winged insect.*] L'angelica farfalla. The butterfly was an ancient and well-known symbol of the human soul. <sup>4</sup> *Abortive.*] The word in the original is entomata. Some critics, and Salvini amongst the rest, have supposed that Dante, finding in a vocabulary the Greek word *ἐντομα* with the article τὰ placed after it to denote its gender, mistook them for one word. From this error he is well exculpated by Rosa Morando in a passage quoted by Lombardi from the Osserv. Parad. III., where it is shown that the Italian word is formed, for the sake of the verse, in analogy with some others used by our Poet ; and that Redi himself, an excellent Greek scholar and a very accurate writer, has even in prose, where such licences are less allowable, thus lengthened it. It may be considered as some proof of our author's acquaintance with the Greek language,

Like the untimely embryo of a worm.

As, to support incumbent floor or roof,  
For corbel, is a figure sometimes seen,  
That crumples up its knees unto its breast ;  
With the feign'd posture, stirring ruth unfeign'd  
In the beholder's fancy ; so I saw  
These fashion'd, when I noted well their guise.

Each, as his back was laden, came indeed  
Or more or less contracted ; and it seem'd  
As he, who show'd most patience in his look,  
Wailing exclaim'd : " I can endure no more."

## CANTO XI

### ARGUMENT

After a prayer uttered by the spirits, who were spoken of in the last Canto, Virgil inquires the way upwards, and is answered by one, who declares himself to have been Omberto, son of the Count of Santafore. Next our Poet distinguishes Oderigi, the illuminator, who discourses on the vanity of worldly fame, and points out to him the soul of Provenzano Salvani.

" O THOU Almighty Father ! who dost make  
The heavens thy dwelling, not in bounds confined,  
But that, with love intenser, there thou view'st  
Thy primal effluence ; hallow'd be thy name :  
Join, each created being, to extol  
Thy might ; for worthy humblest thanks and praise  
Is thy blest Spirit. May thy kingdom's peace

that in the *Convito*, p. 26, he finds fault with the version of Aristotle's *Ethics* made by Taddeo d'Alderotto, the Florentine physician ; and that in the treatise *De Monarchiâ*, lib. i. p. 110, he quotes a Greek word from Aristotle himself. On the other hand, he speaks of a passage in the same writer being doubtful, on account of its being differently interpreted in two different translations, a new and an old one. *Convito*, p. 75. And for the word "autentin," he refers to a vocabulary compiled by Ugucione Bentivegna of Pisa, a MS. that is, perhaps, still remaining, as Cinelli, in his MS. history of Tuscan writers, referred to by Biscioni in the notes on the *Convito*, p. 142, speaks of it as being preserved in the library of S. Francesco at Cesena. After all, Dante's knowledge of Greek must remain as questionable as Shakespeare's of that language and of Latin.

Come unto us ; for we, unless it come,  
With all our striving, thither tend in vain.  
As, of their will, the angels unto thee  
Tender meet sacrifice, circling thy throne  
With loud hosannas ; so of their's be done  
By saintly men on earth. Grant us, this day,  
Our daily manna, without which he roams  
Through this rough desert retrograde, who most  
Toils to advance his steps. As we to each  
Pardon the evil done us, pardon thou  
Benign, and of our merit take no count.  
'Gainst the old adversary, prove thou not  
Our virtue, easily subdued ; but free  
From his incitements, and defeat his wiles.  
This last petition, dearest Lord ! is made  
Not for ourselves ; since that were needless now ;  
But for their sakes who after us remain."

Thus for themselves and us good speed imploring,  
Those spirits went beneath a weight like that  
We sometimes feel in dreams ; all, sore beset,  
But with unequal anguish ; wearied all ;  
Round the first circuit ; purging as they go  
The world's gross darkness off. In our behoof  
If their vows still be offer'd, what can here  
For them be vow'd and done by such, whose wills  
Have root of goodness in them ? Well beseems  
That we should help them wash away the stains  
They carried hence ; that so, made pure and light,  
They may spring upward to the starry spheres.

" Ah ! so may mercy-temper'd justice rid  
Your burdens speedily ; that ye have power  
To stretch your wing, which e'en to your desire  
Shall lift you ; as ye show us on which hand  
Toward the ladder leads the shortest way.  
And if there be more passages than one,  
Instruct us of that easiest to ascend :  
For this man, who comes with me, and bears yet  
The charge of fleshly raiment Adam left him,  
Despite his better will, but slowly mounts."  
From whom the answer came unto these words,



Which my guide spake, appear'd not ; but 'twas said :  
 " Along the bank to rightward come with us ;  
 And ye shall find a pass that mocks not toil  
 Of living man to climb : and were it not  
 That I am hinder'd by the rock, wherewith  
 This arrogant neck is tamed, whence needs I stoop  
 My visage to the ground ; him, who yet lives,  
 Whose name thou speak'st not, him I fain would  
 view ;

To mark if e'er I knew him, and to crave  
 His pity for the fardel that I bear.  
 I was of Latium ; <sup>1</sup> of a Tuscan born,  
 A mighty one : Aldobrandesco's name,  
 My sire's, I know not if ye e'er have heard.  
 My old blood and forefathers' gallant deeds  
 Made me so haughty, that I clean forgot  
 The common mother ; and to such excess  
 Wax'd in my scorn of all men, that I fell,  
 Fell therefore ; by what fate, Siena's sons,  
 Each child in Campagnatico, can tell.  
 I am Umberto : not me, only, pride  
 Hath injured, but my kindred all involved  
 In mischief with her. Here my lot ordains  
 Under this weight to groan, till I appease  
 God's angry justice, since I did it not  
 Amongst the living, here amongst the dead."

Listening I bent my visage down : and one  
 (Not he who spake) twisted beneath the weight  
 That urged him, saw me, knew me straight, and call'd ;  
 Holding his eyes with difficulty fix'd  
 Intent upon me, stooping as I went  
 Companion of their way. " O ! " I exclaim'd,  
 " Art thou not Oderigi ? <sup>2</sup> art not thou  
 Agobbio's glory, glory of that art  
 Which they of Paris call the limner's skill ? "

" Brother ! " said he, " with tints, that gayer smile,

<sup>1</sup> *I was of Latium.*] Umberto, the son of Guglielmo Aldobrandesco, Count of Santafore, in the territory of Siena. His arrogance provoked his countrymen to such a pitch of fury against him, that he was murdered by them at Campagnatico. <sup>2</sup> *Oderigi.*] The illuminator, or miniature painter, a friend of Giotto and Dante.

Bolognian Franco's <sup>1</sup> pencil lines the leaves.  
 His all the honour now ; my light obscured.  
 In truth, I had not been thus courteous to him  
 The whilst I lived, through eagerness of zeal  
 For that pre-eminence my heart was bent on.  
 Here, of such pride, the forfeiture is paid.  
 Nor were I even here, if, able still  
 To sin, I had not turn'd me unto God.  
 O powers of man ! how vain your glory, nipt  
 E'en in its height of verdure, if an age  
 Less bright succeed not. Cimabue <sup>2</sup> thought  
 To lord it over painting's field ; and now  
 The cry is Giotto's, <sup>3</sup> and his name eclipsed.  
 Thus hath one Guido from the other <sup>4</sup> snatch'd  
 The letter'd prize : and he, perhaps, is born, <sup>5</sup>  
 Who shall drive either from their nest. The noise  
 Of worldly fame is but a blast of wind,  
 That blows from diverse points, and shifts its name,  
 Shifting the point it blows from. Shalt thou more  
 Live in the mouths of mankind, if thy flesh  
 Part shrivel'd from thee, than if thou hadst died :  
 Before the coral and the pap were left ;  
 Or o'er some thousand years have past ? and that

<sup>1</sup> *Bolognian Franco.*] Franco of Bologna, who is said to have been a pupil of Oderigi's. <sup>2</sup> *Cimabue.*] Giovanni Cimabue, the restorer of painting, was born at Florence, of a noble family, in 1240, and died in 1300. The passage in the text is an allusion to his epitaph :

Credidit ut Cimabos picturæ castra tenere,

Sic tenuit vivens : nunc tenet astra poli.

<sup>3</sup> *The cry is Giotto's.*] In Giotto we have a proof at how early a period the fine arts were encouraged in Italy. His talents were discovered by Cimabue, while he was tending sheep for his father in the neighbourhood of Florence, and he was afterwards patronized by Pope Benedict xi. and Robert, King of Naples ; and enjoyed the society and friendship of Dante, whose likeness he has transmitted to posterity. He died in 1336, at the age of sixty. <sup>4</sup> *One Guido from the other.*] Guido Cavalcanti, the friend of our Poet (see *Inf.*, Canto x. 59), had eclipsed the literary fame of Guido Guinicelli, of a noble family in Bologna, whom we shall meet with in the twenty-sixth Canto, and of whom frequent and honourable mention is made by our Poet in his treatise *De Vulg. Eloq.* Guinicelli died in 1276, as is proved by Fantuzzi, on the Bolognian writers, tom. iv. p. 345. See Mathias's Tiraboschi, tom. i. p. 110. <sup>5</sup> *He, perhaps, is born.*] Some imagine, with much probability, that Dante here augurs the greatness of his own poetical reputation.

Is, to eternity compared, a space  
Briefer than is the twinkling of an eye  
To the heaven's slowest orb. He there, who treads  
So leisurely before me, far and wide  
Through Tuscany resounded once; and now  
Is in Siena scarce with whispers named:  
There was he sovereign, when destruction caught  
The maddening rage of Florence, in that day  
Proud as she now is loathsome. Your renown  
Is as the herb, whose hue doth come and go;  
And his might withers it, by whom it sprang  
Crude from the lap of earth." I thus to him:  
"True are thy sayings: to my heart they breathe  
The kindly spirit of meekness, and allay  
What tumours rankle there. But who is he,  
Of whom thou spakest but now?" "This," he  
replied,  
"Is Provenzano. He is here, because  
He reach'd, with grasp presumptuous, at the sway  
Of all Siena. Thus he still hath gone,  
Thus goeth never-resting, since he died.  
Such is the acquittance render'd back of him,  
Who, in the mortal life, too much hath dared."  
I then: "If soul, that to life's verge delays  
Repentance, linger in that lower space,  
Nor hither mount (unless good prayers befriend),  
Or ever time, long as it lived, be past;  
How chanced admittance was vouchsafed to him?"  
"When at his glory's topmost height," said he,  
"Respect of dignity all cast aside,  
Freely he fix'd him on Siena's plain,  
A suitor<sup>1</sup> to redeem his suffering friend,

<sup>1</sup> *A suitor.*] Provenzano Salvani humbled himself so far for the sake of one of his friends, who was detained in captivity by Charles I. of Sicily, as personally to supplicate the people of Siena to contribute the sum required by the king for his ransom: and this act of self-abasement atoned for his general ambition and pride. He fell in the battle of Val d'Elsa, wherein the Florentines discomfited the Sienese in June 1269. G. Villani relates some curious particulars of his fate. "Messer Provenzano Salvani, the lord and conductor of the army, was taken, and his head cut off and carried through all the camp fixed upon a lance. And well was accomplished the prophecy and revelation

Who languish'd in the prison-house of Charles ;  
 Nor, for his sake, refused through every vein  
 To tremble. More I will not say ; and dark,  
 I know, my words are ; but thy neighbours soon <sup>1</sup>  
 Shall help thee to a comment on the text.  
 This is the work, that from these limits freed him."

## CANTO XII

### ARGUMENT

Dante being desired by Virgil to look down on the ground which they are treading, observes that it is wrought over with imagery exhibiting various instances of pride recorded in history and fable. They leave the first cornice, and are ushered to the next by an angel who points out the way.

With equal pace, as oxen in the yoke,  
 I, with that laden spirit, journey'd on,  
 Long as the mild instructor suffer'd me ;  
 But, when he bade me quit him, and proceed,  
 (For " Here," said he, " behoves with sail and oars  
 Each man, as best he may, push on his bark,")  
 Upright, as one disposed for speed, I raised  
 My body, still in thought submissive bow'd.

I now my leader's track not loth pursued ;  
 And each had shown how light we fared along,  
 When thus he warned me : " Bend thine eyesight  
 down :

For thou, to ease the way, shalt find it good

made to him by the devil by way of witchcraft, but he understood it not ; for having compelled him to answer how he should succeed in the said engagement, he told him lyingly : ' Thou shalt go, fight, conquer not, die in the battle, and thy head shall be the highest in the camp.' And he thought to have the victory, and from these words thought to remain master of all, and noted not the fallacy, where he said ' conquer not, die.' And therefore it is great folly to trust such counsel as that of the devil." Lib. vii. cap. xxxi.

<sup>1</sup> *Thy neighbours soon.*] " Thou wilt know in the time of thy banishment, which is near at hand, what it is to solicit favours of others, and ' tremble through every vein,' lest they should be refused thee."

To ruminate the bed beneath thy feet."

As, in memorial of the buried, drawn  
Upon earth-level tombs, the sculptured form  
Of what was once, appears (at sight whereof  
Tears often stream forth, by remembrance waked,  
Whose sacred stings the piteous often feel),  
So saw I there, but with more curious skill  
Of portraiture o'erwrought, whate'er of space  
From forth the mountain stretches. On one part  
Him I beheld, above all creatures erst  
Created noblest, lightening fall from heaven :  
On the other side, with bolt celestial pierced,  
Briareus ; cumbering earth he lay, through dint  
Of mortal ice-stroke. The Thymbræan god,<sup>1</sup>  
With Mars, I saw, and Pallas, round their sire,  
Arm'd still, and gazing on the giants' limbs  
Strewn o'er the ethereal field. Nimrod I saw :  
At foot of the stupendous work he stood,  
As if bewilder'd, looking on the crowd  
Leagued in his proud attempt on Sennaar's plain.

O Niobe ! in what a trance of woe  
Thee I beheld, upon that highway drawn,  
Seven sons on either side thee slain. O Saul !  
How ghastly didst thou look, on thine own sword  
Expiring, in Gilboa, from that hour  
Ne'er visited with rain from heaven, or dew.

O fond Arachne ! thee I also saw,  
Half spider now, in anguish, crawling up  
The unfinish'd web thou weaved'st to thy bane.  
O Rehoboam !<sup>2</sup> here thy shape doth seem  
Louring no more defiance ; but fear-smote,  
With none to chase him, in his chariot whirl'd.

Was shown beside upon the solid floor,  
How dear Alcmaeon,<sup>3</sup> forced his mother rate  
That ornament, in evil hour received :  
How, in the temple, on Sennacherib<sup>4</sup> fell

<sup>1</sup> *The Thymbræan god.*] Apollo.

Si modo, quem perhibes, pater est Thymbræus Apollo.

Virg., Georg. iv. 323.

<sup>2</sup> *O Rehoboam.*] 1 Kings xii. 18. <sup>3</sup> *Alcmaeon.*] Virg., Æn. lii. vi. 445, and Homer, Od. xi. 325. <sup>4</sup> *Sennacherib.*] 2 Kings xix. 37.

His sons, and how a corpse they left him there.  
 Was shown the scath, and cruel mangling made  
 By Tomyris <sup>1</sup> on Cyrus, when she cried,  
 "Blood thou didst thirst for: take thy fill of blood."  
 Was shown how routed in the battle fled  
 The Assyrians, Holofernes <sup>2</sup> slain, and e'en  
 The relics of the carnage. Troy I mark'd,  
 In ashes and in caverns. Oh! how fallen,  
 How abject, Ilion, was thy semblance there.

What master of the pencil or the style  
 Had traced the shades and lines, that might have made  
 The subtlest workman wonder? Dead, the dead;  
 The living seem'd alive: with clearer view,  
 His eye beheld not, who beheld the truth,  
 Than mine what I did tread on, while I went  
 Low bending. Now swell out, and with stiff necks  
 Pass on, ye sons of Eve! veil not your looks,  
 Lest they descry the evil of your path.

I noted not (so busied was my thought)  
 How much we now had circled of the mount;  
 And of his course yet more the sun had spent;  
 When he, who with still wakeful caution went,  
 Admonish'd: "Raise thou up thy head: for know  
 Time is not now for slow suspense. Behold,  
 That way, an angel hasting towards us. Lo,  
 Where duly the sixth handmaid <sup>3</sup> doth return  
 From service on the day. Wear thou, in look  
 And gesture, seemly grace of reverent awe;  
 That gladly he may forward us aloft.  
 Consider that this day ne'er dawns again."

Time's loss he had so often warn'd me 'gainst,  
 I could not miss the scope at which he aim'd.

The goodly shape approach'd us, snowy white  
 In vesture, and with visage casting streams  
 Of tremulous lustre like the matin star.  
 His arms he open'd, then his wings; and spake:

<sup>1</sup> Tomyris.] Caput Cyri amputatum in utrem humano sanguine repletum conjici Regina jubet cum hac exprobatore crudelitatis, Satia te, inquit, sanguine quem sitisti, cujusque insatiabilis semper fuisti. Justin., lib. i. cap. 8. <sup>2</sup> Holofernes.] Judith, xiii. <sup>3</sup> The sixth handmaid.] Compare Canto xxii. 116.



"Onward ! the steps, behold, are near ; and now  
The ascent is without difficulty gain'd."

A scanty few are they, who, when they hear  
Such tidings, hasten. O, ye race of men !  
Though born to soar, why suffer ye a wind  
So slight to baffle ye ? He led us on  
Where the rock parted ; here, against my front,  
Did beat his wings ; then promised I should fare  
In safety on my way. As to ascend  
That steep, upon whose brow the chapel stands,<sup>1</sup>  
(O'er Rubaconte, looking lordly down  
On the well-guided city<sup>2</sup>), up the right  
The impetuous rise is broken by the steps  
Carved in that old and simple age, when still  
The registry<sup>3</sup> and label rested safe ;  
Thus is the acclivity relieved, which here,  
Precipitous, from the other circuit falls :  
But, on each hand, the tall cliff presses close.

As, entering, there we turn'd, voices, in strain  
Ineffable, sang : "Blessed<sup>4</sup> are the poor  
In spirit." Ah ! how far unlike to these  
The strains of hell : here songs to usher us,  
There shrieks of woe. We climb the holy stairs :  
And lighter to myself by far I seem'd  
Than on the plain before ; whence thus I spake :  
"Say, master, of what heavy thing have I  
Been lighten'd ; that scarce aught the sense of toil  
Affects me journeying ?" He in few replied :  
"When sin's broad characters,<sup>5</sup> that yet remain

<sup>1</sup> *The chapel stands.*] The church of San Miniato in Florence, situated on a height that overlooks the Arno, where it is crossed by the bridge Rubaconte, so called from Messer Rubaconte da Mandella, of Milan, chief magistrate of Florence, by whom the bridge was founded in 1237. See G. Villani, lib. vi. cap. xxvii. <sup>2</sup> *The well-guided city.*] This is said ironically of Florence.

<sup>3</sup> *The registry.*] In allusion to certain instances of fraud committed in Dante's time with respect to the public accounts and measures. See Paradiso, Canto xvi. 103.

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed.*] "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 3. <sup>5</sup> *Sin's broad characters.*] Of the seven P's,

that denoted the same number of sins (Peccata) whereof he was to be cleansed (see Canto ix. 100), the first had now vanished in consequence of his having past the place where the sin of pride, the chief of them, was expiated.

Upon thy temples, though well nigh effaced,  
Shall be, as one is, all clean razed out ;  
Then shall thy feet by heartiness of will  
Be so o'ercome, they not alone shall feel  
No sense of labour, but delight much more  
Shall wait them, urged along their upward way."

Then like to one, upon whose head is placed  
Somewhat he deems not of, but from the becks  
Of others, as they pass him by ; his hand  
Lends therefore help to assure him, searches, finds,  
And well performs such office as the eye  
Wants power to execute ; so stretching forth  
The fingers of my right hand, did I find  
Six only of the letters, which his sword,  
Who bare the keys, had traced upon my brow.  
The leader, as he mark'd mine action, smiled.

## CANTO XIII

### ARGUMENT

They gain the second cornice, where the sin of envy is purged ; and having proceeded a little to the right, they hear voices uttered by invisible spirits recounting famous examples of charity, and next behold the shades, or souls, of the envious clad in sackcloth, and having their eyes sewed up with an iron thread. Amongst these Dante finds Sapia, a Sienese lady, from whom he learns the cause of her being there.

WE reach'd the summit of the scale, and stood  
Upon the second buttress of that mount  
Which healeth him who climbs. A cornice there,  
Like to the former, girdles round the hill ;  
Save that its arch, with sweep less ample, bends.

Shadow, nor image there, is seen : all smooth  
The rampart and the path, reflecting nought  
But the rock's sullen hue. " If here we wait,  
For some to question," said the bard, " I fear  
Our choice may haply meet too long delay."

Then fixedly upon the sun his eyes

He fasten'd ; made his right the central point  
From whence to move ; and turn'd the left aside.

" O pleasant light, my confidence and hope !  
Conduct us thou," he cried, " on this new way,  
Where now I venture ; leading to the bourn  
We seek. The universal world to thee  
Owes warmth and lustre. If <sup>1</sup> no other cause  
Forbid, thy beams should ever be our guide."

Far, as is measured for a mile on earth,  
In brief space had we journey'd ; such prompt  
will

Impell'd ; and towards us flying, now were heard  
Spirits invisible, who courteously

Unto love's table bade the welcome guest.

The voice, that first flew by, call'd forth aloud,

" They have no wine," <sup>2</sup> so on behind us past,

Those sounds reiterating, nor yet lost

In the faint distance, when another came

Crying, " I am Orestes," <sup>3</sup> and alike

Wing'd its fleet way. " O father ! " I exclaim'd,

" What tongues are these ? " and as I question'd, lo !

A third exclaiming, " Love ye those have wrong'd  
you." <sup>4</sup>

" This circuit," said my teacher, " knots the  
scourge" <sup>5</sup>

For envy ; and the cords are therefore drawn

By charity's correcting hand. The curb

Is of a harsher sound ; as thou shalt hear

(If I deem rightly) ere thou reach the pass,

Where pardon sets them free. But fix thine eyes

Intently through the air ; and thou shalt see

<sup>1</sup> *If.*] " Unless there be some urgent necessity for travelling by night, the daylight should be preferred for that purpose." <sup>2</sup> *They have no wine.*] John ii. 3. These words of the Virgin are referred to as an instance of charity. <sup>3</sup> *Orestes.*] Alluding to his friendship with Pylades. <sup>4</sup> *Love ye those have wrong'd you.*] " But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matt. v. 44. <sup>5</sup> *The scourge.*] " The chastisement of envy consists in hearing examples of the opposite virtue, charity. As a curb and restraint on this vice, you will presently hear very different sounds, those of threatening and punishment."

A multitude before thee seated, each  
Along the shelving grot." Then more than erst  
I oped mine eyes ; before me view'd ; and saw  
Shadows with garments dark as was the rock ;  
And when we pass'd a little forth, I heard  
A crying, " Blessed Mary ! pray for us,  
Michael and Peter ! all ye saintly host ! "

I do not think there walks on earth this day  
Man so remorseless, that he had not yearn'd  
With pity at the sight that next I saw.  
Mine eyes a load of sorrow teem'd, when now  
I stood so near them, that their semblances  
Came clearly to my view. Of sackcloth vile  
Their covering seem'd ; and, on his shoulder, one  
Did stay another, leaning ; and all lean'd  
Against the cliff. E'en thus the blind and poor,  
Near the confessionals, to crave an alms  
Stand, each his head upon his fellow's sunk ;  
So most to stir compassion, not by sound  
Of words alone, but that which moves not less,  
The sight of misery. And as never beam  
Of noon-day visiteth the eyeless man,  
E'en so was heaven a niggard unto these  
Of his fair light : for, through the orbs of all,  
A thread of wire, impiercing, knits them up,  
As for the taming of a haggard hawk.

It were a wrong, methought, to pass and look  
On others, yet myself the while unseen.  
To my sage counsel therefore did I turn.  
He knew the meaning of the mute appeal,  
Nor waited for my questioning, but said :  
" Speak ; and be brief, be subtle in thy words."

On that part of the cornice, whence no rim  
Engarlands its steep fall, did Virgil come ;  
On the other side me were the spirits, their cheeks  
Bathing devout with penitential tears,  
That through the dread impalement forced a way.

I turn'd me to them, and " O shades ! " said I,  
" Assured that to your eyes unveil'd shall shine  
The lofty light, sole object of your wish,

So may heaven's grace <sup>1</sup> clear whatsoe'er of foam  
 Floats turbid on the conscience, that thenceforth  
 The stream of mind roll limpid from its source ;  
 As ye declare (for so shall ye impart  
 A boon I dearly prize) if any soul  
 Of Latium dwell among ye : and perchance  
 That soul may profit, if I learn so much."

"My brother ! we are, each one, citizens  
 Of one true city.<sup>2</sup> Any, thou wouldst say,  
 Who lived a stranger in Italia's land."

So heard I answering, as appear'd, a voice  
 That onward came some space from whence I stood.

A spirit I noted, in whose look was mark'd  
 Expectance. Ask ye how ? The chin was raised  
 As in one reft of sight. "Spirit," said I,  
 "Who for thy rise art tutoring (if thou be  
 That which didst answer to me), or by place,  
 Or name, disclose thyself, that I may know thee."

"I was," it answer'd, "of Siena : here  
 I cleanse away with these the evil life,  
 Soliciting with tears that He, who is,  
 Vouchsafe him to us. Though Sapia <sup>3</sup> named,  
 In sapience I excell'd not ; gladder far  
 Of other's hurt, than of the good befell me.  
 That thou mayst own I now deceive thee not,  
 Hear, if my folly were not as I speak it.  
 When now my years sloped waning down the arch,  
 It so bechanced, my fellow-citizens  
 Near Colle met their enemies in the field ;

<sup>1</sup> *So may heaven's grace.*] Se tosto grazia risolve le schiume  
 Di vostra coscienza, si che chiaro  
 Per esso scenda della mente il fiume.

This is a fine moral, and finely expressed. Unless the conscience be cleared from its impurity, which it can only thoroughly be by an influence from above, the mind itself cannot act freely and clearly.  
 "If ye will do His will, ye shall know of the doctrine." John vii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Citizens*

*Of one true city.*] "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Heb. xiii. 14. <sup>3</sup> *Sapia.*] A lady of Siena, who, living in exile at Colle, was so overjoyed at a defeat which her countrymen sustained near that place, that she declared nothing more was wanting to make her die contented. The Latin annotator on the Monte Cassino MS. says of this lady : "fuit uxor D. Cinii de Pigezo de Senis."

And I pray'd God to grant what He had will'd.<sup>1</sup>  
 There were they vanquish'd, and betook themselves  
 Unto the bitter passages of flight.  
 I mark'd the hunt ; and waxing out of bounds  
 In gladness, lifted up my shameless brow,  
 And, like the merlin<sup>2</sup> cheated by a gleam,  
 Cried, ' It is over. Heaven ! I fear thee not.'  
 Upon my verge of life I wish'd for peace  
 With God ; nor yet repentance had supplied  
 What I did lack of duty, were it not  
 The hermit Piero,<sup>3</sup> touch'd with charity,  
 In his devout oraisons thought on me.  
 But who art thou that question'st of our state,  
 Who go'st, as I believe, with lids unclosed,  
 And breathest in thy talk ? "—" Mine eyes," said I,  
 " May yet be here ta'en from me ; but not long ;  
 For they have not offended grievously  
 With envious glances. But the woe beneath<sup>4</sup>  
 Urges my soul with more exceeding dread.  
 That nether load already weighs me down."

She thus : " Who then, amongst us here aloft,  
 Hath brought thee, if thou weenest to return ? "

" He," answered I, " who standeth mute beside me.  
 I live : of me ask therefore, chosen spirit !  
 If thou desire I yonder yet should move  
 For thee my mortal feet."—" Oh ! " she replied,  
 " This is so strange a thing, it is great sign  
 That God doth love thee. Therefore with thy prayer  
 Sometime assist me : and, by that I crave,  
 Which most thou covetest, that if thy feet  
 E'er tread on Tuscan soil, thou save my fame  
 Amongst my kindred. Them shalt thou behold  
 With that vain multitude,<sup>5</sup> who set their hope

<sup>1</sup> *And I pray'd God to grant what He had will'd.*] That her countrymen should be defeated in battle. <sup>2</sup> *The merlin.*] The story of the merlin is, that having been induced by a gleam of fine weather in the winter to escape from his master, he was soon oppressed by the rigour of the season.

<sup>3</sup> *The hermit Piero.*] Piero Pettinagno, a holy hermit of Florence.

<sup>4</sup> *The woe beneath.*] Dante felt that he was much more subject to the sin of pride, than to that of envy ; and this is just what we should have concluded of a mind such as his. <sup>5</sup> *That vain multitude.*]

The Sienese. See Inf., c. xxix. 118. " Their acquisition of Tela-



On Telamone's haven ; there to fail  
 Confounded, more than when the fancied stream  
 They sought, of Dian call'd : but they, who lead <sup>1</sup>  
 Their navies, more than ruin'd hopes shall mourn."

## CANTO XIV

## ARGUMENT

Our Poet on this second cornice finds also the souls of Guido del Duca of Brettinoro, and Rinieri da Calboli of Romagna ; the latter of whom, hearing that he comes from the banks of the Arno, inveighs against the degeneracy of all those who dwell in the cities visited by that stream ; and the former, in like manner, against the inhabitants of Romagna. On leaving these, our Poets hear voices recording noted instances of envy.

" SAY,<sup>2</sup> who is he around our mountain winds,  
 Or ever death has pruned his wing for flight ;  
 That opes his eyes, and covers them at will ? "

" I know not who he is, but know thus much ;  
 He comes not singly. Do thou ask of him,  
 For thou art nearer to him ; and take heed,  
 Accost him gently, so that he may speak."

Thus on the right two spirits, bending each  
 Toward the other, talk'd of me ; then both  
 Addressing me, their faces backward lean'd,  
 And thus the one<sup>3</sup> began : " O soul, who yet  
 Pent in the body, tendest towards the sky !  
 For charity, we pray thee, comfort us ;  
 Recounting whence thou comest, and who thou art :

mone, a seaport on the confines of the Maremma, has led them to conceive hopes of becoming a naval power ; but this scheme will prove as chimerical as their former plan for the discovery of a subterraneous stream under their city." Why they gave the appellation of Diana to the imagined stream, Venturi says he leaves it to the antiquaries of Siena to conjecture.

<sup>1</sup> *They, who lead.*] The Latin note to the Monte Cassino MS. informs us, that those who were to command the fleets of the Sienese, in the event of their becoming a naval power, lost their lives during their employment of Telamone, through the pestilent air of the Maremma, which lies near that place. <sup>2</sup> *Say.*] The two spirits who thus speak

to each other are, Guido del Duca of Brettinoro, and Rinieri da Calboli of Romagna. <sup>3</sup> *The one.*] Guido del Duca.

For thou dost make us, at the favour shown thee,  
Marvel, as at a thing that ne'er hath been."

"There stretches through the midst of Tuscany,"  
I straight began, "a brooklet,<sup>1</sup> whose well-head  
Springs up in Falterona; with his race  
Not satisfied, when he some hundred miles  
Hath measured. From his banks bring I this frame.  
To tell you who I am were words mis-spent:  
For yet my name scarce sounds on rumour's lip."

"If well I do incorporate with my thought  
The meaning of thy speech," said he, who first  
Address'd me, "thou dost speak of Arno's wave."

To whom the other:<sup>2</sup> "Why, hath he conceal'd  
The title of that river, as a man  
Doth of some horrible thing?" The spirit, who  
Thereof was question'd, did acquit him thus:  
"I know not: but 'tis fitting well the name  
Should perish of that vale; for from the source,<sup>3</sup>  
Where teems so plenteously the Alpine steep  
Maim'd of Pelorus<sup>4</sup> (that doth scarcely pass<sup>5</sup>  
Beyond that limit), even to the point  
Where unto ocean is restored what heaven  
Drains from the exhaustless store for all earth's  
streams,  
Throughout the space is virtue worried down,  
As 't were a snake, by all, for mortal foe;  
Or through disastrous influence on the place,  
Or else distortion of misguided wills  
That custom goads to evil: whence in those,  
The dwellers in that miserable vale,  
Nature is so transform'd, it seems as they

<sup>1</sup> *A brooklet.*] The Arno, that rises in Falterona, a mountain in the Apennine. Its course is a hundred and twenty miles, according to G. Villani, who traces it accurately. <sup>2</sup> *The other.*] Rinieri da Calboli.

<sup>3</sup> *From the source.*] "From the rise of the Arno in that 'Alpine steep,' the Apennine, from whence Pelorus in Sicily was torn by a convulsion of the earth, even to the point where the same river unites its waters to the ocean, Virtue is persecuted by all." <sup>4</sup> *Maim'd of Pelorus.*] Virg., *Æn.* lib. iii. 414. Lucan, *Phars.* lib. ii. 438. <sup>5</sup> *That doth scarcely pass.*] "Pelorus is in few places higher than Falterona, where the Arno springs." Lombardi explains this differently, and, I think, erroneously.

Had shared of Circe's feeding. 'Midst brute swine,<sup>1</sup>  
 Worthier of acorns than of other food.  
 Created for man's use, he shapeth first  
 His obscure way ; then, sloping onward, finds  
 Curs,<sup>2</sup> snarlers more in spite than power, from whom  
 He turns with scorn aside : still journeying down,  
 By how much more the curst and luckless foss  
 Swells out to largeness, e'en so much it finds  
 Dogs turning into wolves.<sup>3</sup> Descending still  
 Through yet more hollow eddies, next he meets  
 A race of foxes,<sup>4</sup> so replete with craft,  
 They do not fear that skill can master it.  
 Nor will I cease because my words are heard<sup>5</sup>  
 By other ears than thine. It shall be well  
 For this man,<sup>6</sup> if he keep in memory  
 What from no erring spirit I reveal.  
 Lo ! I behold thy grandson,<sup>7</sup> that becomes  
 A hunter of those wolves, upon the shore  
 Of the fierce stream ; and cows them all with dread.  
 Their flesh, yet living, sets he up to sale,  
 Then, like an aged beast, to slaughter dooms.  
 Many of life he reaves, himself of worth  
 And goodly estimation. Smear'd with gore,  
 Mark how he issues from the rueful wood ;  
 Leaving such havoc, that in thousand years  
 It spreads not to prime lustihood again."

As one, who tidings hears of woe to come,  
 Changes his looks perturb'd, from whate'er part  
 The peril grasp him ; so beheld I change  
 That spirit, who had turn'd to listen ; struck  
 With sadness, soon as he had caught the word.

His visage, and the other's speech, did raise  
 Desire in me to know the names of both ;  
 Whereof, with meek entreaty, I inquired.

<sup>1</sup> *'Midst brute swine.*] The people of Casentino. <sup>2</sup> *Curs.*] The Arno leaves Arezzo about four miles to the left. <sup>3</sup> *Wolves.*] The Florentines. <sup>4</sup> *Foxes.*] The Pisans. <sup>5</sup> *My words are heard.*] It should be recollected that Guido still addresses himself to Rinieri. <sup>6</sup> *For this man.*] "For Dante, who has told us that he comes from the banks of Arno." <sup>7</sup> *Thy grandson.*] Fulcieri da Calboli, grandson of Rinieri da Calboli who is here spoken to. The atrocities predicted came to pass in 1302. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. lix.

The shade, who late address'd me, thus resumed, ✓  
 "Thy wish imports, that I vouchsafe to do  
 For thy sake what thou wilt not do <sup>1</sup> for mine.  
 But, since God's will is that so largely shine  
 His grace in thee, I will be liberal too.  
 Guido of Duca know then that I am.  
 Envy so parch'd my blood, that had I seen  
 A fellow-man made joyous, thou hadst mark'd  
 A livid paleness overspread my cheek.  
 Such harvest reap I of the seed I sow'd.  
 O man! why place <sup>2</sup> thy heart where there doth need  
 Exclusion of participants in good?  
 This is Rinieri's spirit; this, the boast  
 And honour of the house of Calboli;  
 Where of his worth no heritage remains.  
 Nor his the only blood, that hath been stript  
 ('Twixt Po, the mount, the Reno, and the shore) <sup>3</sup>  
 Of all that truth or fancy <sup>4</sup> asks for bliss:  
 But, in those limits, such a growth has sprung  
 Of rank and venom'd roots, as long would mock  
 Slow culture's toil. Where is good Lizio? <sup>5</sup> where  
 Manardi, Traversaro, and Carpigna? <sup>6</sup>  
 O bastard slips of old Romagna's line!  
 When in Bologna the low artisan,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *What thou wilt not do.*] Dante having declined telling him his name. See v. 22. <sup>2</sup> *Why place.*] This will be explained in the ensuing Canto.  
<sup>3</sup> *'Twixt Po, the mount, the Reno, and the shore.*] The boundaries of Romagna. <sup>4</sup> *Fancy.*] "Trastullo." Quadrio, in the notes on the second of the Salmi Penitenziali of our author, understands this in a higher sense, as meaning that joy which results from an easy and constant practice of virtue. See *Opere di Dante*, Zatta ediz. tom. iv. part ii. p. 193. And he is followed by Lombardi. <sup>5</sup> *Lizio.*] Lizio da Valbona introduced into Boccaccio's Decameron, G. v. N. 4.  
<sup>6</sup> *Manardi, Traversaro, and Carpigna.*] Arrigo Manardi of Faenza, or, as some say, of Brettinoro; Pier Traversaro, lord of Ravenna; and Guido di Carpigna of Montefeltro. <sup>7</sup> *In Bologna the low artisan.*] One who had been a mechanic, named Lambertaccio, arrived at almost supreme power in Bologna.

Quando in Bologna un Fabro si ralligna:

Quando in Faenza un Bernardin di Fosco.

The pointing and the marginal note of the Monte Cassino MS. entirely change the sense of these two lines. There is a mark of interrogation added to each; and by way of answer to both there is written, "Quasi dicat numquam." Fabro is made a proper name, and it is said of him: "Iste fuit Dom. Faber de Lambertaciis de Bononia"; and Benvenuto

And in Faenza yon Bernardin <sup>1</sup> sprouts,  
 A gentle cyon from ignoble stem.  
 Wonder not, Tuscan, if thou see me weep,  
 When I recall to mind those once loved names,  
 Guido of Prata,<sup>2</sup> and of Azzo him <sup>3</sup>  
 That dwelt with us ; <sup>4</sup> Tignoso <sup>5</sup> and his troop,  
 With Traversaro's house and Anastagio's <sup>6</sup>  
 (Each race disherited) ; and beside these,  
 The ladies and the knights, the toils and ease,  
 That witch'd us into love and courtesy ;  
 Where now such malice reigns in recreant hearts.  
 O Brettinoro ! <sup>7</sup> wherefore tarriest still,  
 Since forth of thee thy family hath gone,  
 And many, hating evil, join'd their steps ?  
 Well doeth he, that bids his lineage cease,  
 Bagnacavallo ; <sup>8</sup> Castracaro ill,  
 And Conio worse,<sup>9</sup> who care to propagate

da Imola calls him "Nobilis Miles." I have not ventured to alter the translation so as to make it accord with this interpretation, as it must have been done in the face, I believe, of nearly all the editions, and, as far as may be gathered from the silence of Lombardi, of the MSS. also which that commentator had consulted. But those, who wish to see more, on the subject, are referred to Monti's Proposta, tom. iii. p.<sup>te</sup> 2, under the word "Ralligare."

<sup>1</sup> *Yon Bernardin.*] Bernardin di Fosco, a man of low origin, but great talents, who governed at Faenza. <sup>2</sup> *Prata.*] A place between Faenza and Ravenna. <sup>3</sup> *Of Azzo him.*] Ugolino, of the Ubaldini family in Tuscany. <sup>4</sup> *With us.*] Lombardi claims the reading, "nosco," instead of "vosco," "with us," instead of "with you," for his favourite edition ; but it is also in Landino's of 1488. <sup>5</sup> *Tignoso.*] Federigo Tignoso of Rimini. <sup>6</sup> *Traversaro's house and Anastagio's.*] Two noble families of Ravenna. See v. 100. She, to whom Dryden has given the name of Honoria, in the fable so admirably paraphrased from Boccaccio, was of the former : her lover and the spectre were of the Anastagi family. See Canto xxviii. 20. <sup>7</sup> *O Brettinoro.*] A beautifully situated castle in Romagna, the hospitable residence of Guido del Duca, who is here speaking. Landino relates, that there were several of this family, who, when a stranger arrived amongst them, contended with one another by whom he should be entertained ; and that in order to end this dispute, they set up a pillar with as many rings as there were fathers of families among them, a ring being assigned to each, and that accordingly as a stranger on his arrival hung his horse's bridle on one or other of these, he became his guest to whom the ring belonged. <sup>8</sup> *Bagnacavallo.*] A castle between Imola and Ravenna.

<sup>9</sup> *Castracaro ill,*

*And Conio worse.] Both in Romagna.*

A race of Counties<sup>1</sup> from such blood as theirs.  
 Well shall ye also do, Pagani,<sup>2</sup> then  
 When from amongst you hies your demon child ;  
 Not so, howe'er,<sup>3</sup> that thenceforth there remain  
 True proof of what ye were. O Hugolin,<sup>4</sup>  
 Thou sprung of Fantolini's line ! thy name  
 Is safe ; since none is look'd for after thee  
 To cloud its lustre, warping from thy stock.  
 But, Tuscan ! go thy ways ; for now I take  
 Far more delight in weeping, than in words.  
 Such<sup>5</sup> pity for your sakes hath wrung my heart."

We knew those gentle spirits, at parting, heard  
 Our steps. Their silence therefore, of our way,  
 Assured us. Soon as we had quitted them,  
 Advancing onward, lo ! a voice, that seem'd  
 Like volley'd lightening, when it rives the air,  
 Met us, and shouted, " Whosoever finds  
 Will slay me " ;<sup>6</sup> then fled from us, as the bolt  
 Lanced sudden from a downward-rushing cloud.  
 When it had given short truce unto our hearing,  
 Behold the other with a crash as loud  
 As the quick-following thunder : " Mark in me  
 Aglauros,<sup>7</sup> turn'd to rock." I, at the sound  
 Retreating, drew more closely to my guide.

<sup>1</sup> *Counties.*] I have used this word here for "Counts," as it is in Shakspeare. <sup>2</sup> *Pagani.*] The Pagani were lords of Faenza and Imola. One of them, Machinardo, was named *the Demon*, from his treachery. See *Inf.*, Canto xxvii. 47, and note. <sup>3</sup> *Not so, howe'er.*]

"Yet your offspring will be stained with some vice, and will not afford true proof of the worth of your ancestors." <sup>4</sup> *Hugolin.*] Ugolino Ubaldini, a noble and virtuous person in Faenza, who, on account of his age probably, was not likely to leave any offspring behind him. He is enumerated among the poets by Crescimbeni, and by Tiraboschi, *Mathias* edit. vol. i. p. 143 ; and Peticari cites a beautiful little poem by him in the *Apologia* di Dante, parte ii. c. 27, but with so little appearance of antiquity that nothing less than the assurance of so able a critic could induce one for a moment to receive it as genuine.

<sup>5</sup> *Such.*] Here again the Nidobeatina edition adopted by Lombardi, and the Monte Cassino MS. differ from the common reading, and both have

Si m' ha nostra region la mente stretta,

Our country's sorrow has so wrung my heart  
 instead of Si m' ha vostra region, &c.

<sup>6</sup> ————— *Whosoever finds*

*Will slay me.*] The words of Cain. *Gen.* iv. 14.

<sup>7</sup> *Aglauros.*] Ovid, *Metam.* lib. ii. fab. 12.



Now in mute stilness rested all the air ;  
 And thus he spake : " There was the galling-bit,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which should keep man within his boundary.  
 But your old enemy so baits the hook,  
 He drags you eager to him. Hence nor curb  
 Avails you, nor reclaiming call. Heaven calls,  
 And, round about you wheeling, courts your gaze  
 With everlasting beauties. Yet your eye  
 Turns with fond doting still upon the earth.  
 Therefore He smites you who discerneth all."

## CANTO XV

## ARGUMENT

An angel invites them to ascend the next step. On their way Dante suggests certain doubts, which are resolved by Virgil ; and, when they reach the third cornice, where the sin of anger is purged, our Poet, in a kind of waking dream, beholds remarkable instances of patience ; and soon after they are enveloped in a dense fog.

As much <sup>2</sup> as 'twixt the third hour's close and dawn,  
 Appareth of heaven's sphere, that ever whirls  
 As restless as an infant in his play ;  
 So much appear'd remaining to the sun  
 Of his slope journey towards the western goal.

Evening was there, and here the noon of night ;  
 And full upon our forehead smote the beams.  
 For round the mountain, circling, so our path  
 Had led us, that toward the sun-set now  
 Direct we journey'd ; when I felt a weight  
 Of more exceeding splendour, than before,  
 Press on my front. The cause unknown, amaze  
 Possess'd me ! and both hands against my brows

<sup>1</sup> *There was the galling bit.*] Referring to what had been before said, Canto xiii. 35. The commentators remark the unusual word "*camo*," which occurs here in the original ; but they have not observed, I believe, that Dante himself uses it in the *De Monarchiâ*, lib. iii. p. 155. For the Greek word, *χάμον*, see a fragment by S. Petrus Alex. in Routh's *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. iii. p. 342, and note. <sup>2</sup> *As much.*] It wanted three hours of sunset.

Lifting, I interposed them, as a screen,  
 That of its gorgeous superflux of light  
 Clips the diminish'd orb. As when the ray,<sup>1</sup>  
 Striking on water or the surface clear  
 Of mirror, leaps unto the opposite part,  
 Ascending at a glance,<sup>2</sup> e'en as it fell,  
 And as much<sup>3</sup> differs from the stone, that falls  
 Through equal space (so practic skill hath shown);  
 Thus, with refracted light, before me seem'd  
 The ground there smitten; whence, in sudden  
 haste,  
 My sight recoil'd. "What is this, sire beloved!  
 'Gainst which I strive to shield the sight in  
 vain?"

Cried I, "and which toward us moving seems?"

"Marvel not, if the family of heaven,"

He answer'd, "yet with dazzling radiance dim  
 Thy sense. It is a messenger who comes,  
 Inviting man's ascent. Such sights ere long,  
 Not grievous, shall impart to thee delight,  
 As thy perception is by nature wrought  
 Up to their pitch." The blessed angel, soon  
 As we had reach'd him, hail'd us with glad voice:  
 "Here enter on a ladder far less steep,  
 Than ye have yet encounter'd." We forthwith  
 Ascending, heard behind us chanted sweet,

<sup>1</sup> *As when the ray.*]

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen aënis  
 Sole repperçussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,  
 Omnia pervolitat late loca, jamque sub auras  
 Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti. *Æn. lib. viii. 25.*

Compare Apoll. Rhodius, iii. 755.

<sup>2</sup> *Ascending at a glance.*]

Quod simul ac primum sub divo splendor aquai  
 \* Ponitur: extemplo, cœlo stellante, serena  
 Sidera respondent in aquâ radiantia mundi.  
 Jamne vides igitur, quam parvo tempore imago  
 Ætheris ex oris ad terrarum accidat oras.

*Lucret. lib. iv. 215.*

<sup>3</sup> *And as much.*] Lombardi, I think justly, observes that this does not refer to the length of time which a stone is in falling to the ground, but to the perpendicular line which it describes when falling, as contrasted with the angle of incidence formed by light reflected from water or from a mirror.

"Blessed the merciful,"<sup>1</sup> and "Happy thou  
That conquer'st." Lonely each, my guide and I,  
Pursued our upward way; and as we went,  
Some profit from his words I hoped to win,  
And thus of him inquiring, framed my speech:  
"What meant Romagna's spirit,<sup>2</sup> when he spake  
Of bliss exclusive, with no partner shared?"

He straight replied: "No wonder, since he  
knows

What sorrow waits on his own worst defect,  
If he chide others, that they less may mourn.  
Because ye point your wishes at a mark,  
Where, by communion of possessors, part  
Is lessen'd, envy bloweth up men's sighs.  
No fear of that might touch ye, if the love  
Of higher sphere exalted your desire.  
For there,<sup>3</sup> by how much more they call it *ours*,  
So much propriety of each in good  
Encreases more, and heighten'd charity  
Wraps that fair cloister in a brighter flame."

"Now lack I satisfaction more," said I,  
"Than if thou hadst been silent at the first;<sup>4</sup>  
And doubt more gathers on my labouring thought.  
How can it chance, that good distributed,  
The many, that possess it, makes more rich,  
Than if 't were shared by few?" He answering  
thus:

"Thy mind, reverting still to things of earth,  
Strikes darkness from true light. The highest good  
Unlimited, ineffable, doth so speed  
To love, as beam to lucid body darts,

<sup>1</sup> *Blessed the merciful.*] Matt. v. 7.    <sup>2</sup> *Romagna's spirit.*] Guido del Duca, of Brettinoro, whom we have seen in the preceding Canto.  
<sup>3</sup> *For there.*] Landino has here cited, in addition to Seneca and Boetius, the two following apposite passages from St. Augustine and St. Gregory: "Nullo modo fit minor accedente consortio possessio bonitatis, quam tanto latius quanto concordius individua sociorum possidet caritas." Augustin. de Civitate Dei. "Qui facibus invidiæ carere desiderat, illam possessionem appetat, quam numerus possidentium non angustat."    <sup>4</sup> Editor's note: *Than if thou hadst been silent at the first.*] "Se mi fossi pria taciuto." This line should read: "Than if *I had* been silent at the first."

Giving as much of ardour as it finds.  
 The sempiternal effluence streams abroad,  
 Spreading, wherever charity extends.  
 So that the more aspirants to that bliss  
 Are multiplied, more good is there to love,  
 And more is lov'd ; as mirrors, that reflect,  
 Each unto other, propagated light.  
 If these my words avail not to allay  
 Thy thirsting, Beatrice thou shalt see,  
 Who of this want, and of all else thou hast,  
 Shall rid thee to the full. Provide but thou,<sup>1</sup>  
 That from thy temples may be soon erased,  
 E'en as the two already, those five scars,  
 That, when they pain thee worst, then kindest  
 heal."

"Thou," I had said, "content'st me" ; when I  
 saw

The other round was gain'd, and wondering eyes  
 Did keep me mute. There suddenly I seem'd  
 By an ecstatic vision wrapt away ;  
 And in a temple saw, methought, a crowd  
 Of many persons ; and at the entrance stood  
 A dame,<sup>2</sup> whose sweet demeanour did express  
 A mother's love, who said, " Child ! why hast thou  
 Dealt with us thus ? Behold thy sire and I  
 Sorrowing have sought thee " ; and so held her peace ;  
 And straight the vision fled. A female next  
 Appeared before me, down whose visage coursed  
 Those waters, that grief forces out from one  
 By deep resentment stung, who seem'd to say :  
 " If thou, Pisistratus, be lord indeed  
 Over this city,<sup>3</sup> named with such debate  
 Of adverse gods, and whence each science sparkles,  
 Avenge thee of those arms, whose bold embrace  
 Hath clasp'd our daughter " ; and to her, me-  
 seem'd,

<sup>1</sup> *Provide but thou.*] "Take heed that thou be healed of the five remaining sins, as thou already art of the two, namely, pride and envy."

<sup>2</sup> *A dame.*] Luke ii. 48. <sup>3</sup> *Over this city.*] Athens, named after 'Aθῆναι, Minerva, in consequence of her having produced a more valuable gift for it in the olive, than Neptune had done in the horse.

Benign and meek, with visage undisturb'd,  
 Her sovran spake: "How shall we those requite<sup>1</sup>  
 Who wish us evil, if we thus condemn  
 The man that loves us?" After that I saw  
 A multitude, in fury burning, slay  
 With stones a stripling youth,<sup>2</sup> and shout amain  
 "Destroy, destroy"; and him I saw, who bow'd  
 Heavy with death unto the ground, yet made  
 His eyes, unfolded upward, gates to heaven,  
 Praying forgiveness of the Almighty Sire,  
 Amidst that cruel conflict, on his foes,  
 With looks that win compassion to their aim.

Soon as my spirit, from her airy flight  
 Returning, sought again the things whose truth  
 Depends not on her shaping, I observed  
 She had not roved to falsehood in her dreams.

Meanwhile the leader, who might see I moved  
 As one who struggles to shake off his sleep,  
 Exclaim'd: "What ails thee, that thou canst not  
 hold

Thy footing firm; but more than half a league  
 Hast travel'd with closed eyes and tottering gait,  
 Like to a man by wine or sleep o'ercharged?"

"Beloved father! so thou deign," said I,  
 "To listen, I will tell thee what appear'd  
 Before me, when so fail'd my sinking steps."

He thus: "Not if thy countenance were mask'd  
 With hundred vizards, could a thought of thine,  
 How small soe'er, elude me. What thou saw'st  
 Was shown, that freely thou mightst ope thy heart  
 To the waters of peace, that flow diffused  
 From their eternal fountain. I not ask'd,  
 What ails thee? for such cause as he doth, who  
 Looks only with that eye, which sees no more,  
 When spiritless the body lies; but ask'd,  
 To give fresh vigour to thy foot. Such goads,

<sup>1</sup> *How shall we those requite.*] The answer of Pisistratus the tyrant to his wife, when she urged him to inflict the punishment of death on a young man, who, inflamed with love for his daughter, had snatched a kiss from her in public. The story is told by Valerius Maximus, lib. v. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *A stripling youth.*] The protomartyr Stephen.

The slow and loitering need ; that they be found  
Not wanting, when their hour of watch returns."

So on we journey'd, through the evening sky  
Gazing intent, far onward as our eyes,  
With level view, could stretch against the bright  
Vespertine ray : and lo ! by slow degrees  
Gathering, a fog made towards us, dark as night.  
There was no room for 'scaping ; and that mist  
Bereft us, both of sight and the pure air.

## CANTO XVI

### ARGUMENT

As they proceed through the mist, they hear the voices of spirits praying. Marco Lombardo, one of these, points out to Dante the error of such as impute our actions to necessity ; explains to him that man is endued with free will ; and shows that much of human depravity results from the undue mixture of spiritual and temporal authority in rulers.

HELL'S dunnest gloom, or night unlustrous, dark,  
Of every planet 'reft, and pall'd in clouds,  
Did never spread before the sight a veil  
In thickness like that fog, nor to the sense  
So palpable and gross. Entering its shade,  
Mine eye endured not with unclosed lids ;  
Which marking, near me drew the faithful guide,  
Offering me his shoulder for a stay.

As the blind man behind his leader walks,  
Lest he should err, or stumble unawares  
On what might harm him or perhaps destroy ;  
I journey'd through that bitter air and foul,  
Still listening to my escort's warning voice,  
"Look that from me thou part not." Straight I  
heard

Voices, and each one seem'd to pray for peace,  
And for compassion, to the Lamb of God  
That taketh sins away. Their prelude still  
Was "Agnus Dei" ; and through all the choir,



One voice, one measure ran, that perfect seem'd  
 The concord of their song. "Are these I hear  
 Spirits, O master?" I exclaim'd; and he,  
 "Thou aim'st aright: these loose the bonds of wrath."  
 "Now who art thou, that through our smoke dost  
 cleave.

And speak'st of us, as thou <sup>1</sup> thyself e'en yet  
 Dividedst time by calends?" So one voice  
 Bespake me; whence my master said, "Reply;  
 And ask, if upward hence the passage lead."

"O being! who dost make thee pure, to stand  
 Beautiful once more in thy Maker's sight;  
 Along with me: and thou shalt hear and wonder."  
 Thus I, whereto the spirit answering spake:

"Long as 'tis lawful for me, shall my steps  
 Follow on thine; and since the cloudy smoke  
 Forbids the seeing, hearing in its stead  
 Shall keep us join'd." I then forthwith began:

"Yet in my mortal swathing, I ascend  
 To higher regions; and am hither come  
 Through the fearful agony of hell.

And, if so largely God hath doled His grace,  
 That, clean beside all modern precedent,  
 He wills me to behold His kingly state;  
 From me conceal not who thou wast, ere death  
 Had loosed thee; but instruct me: and instruct  
 If rightly to the pass I tend; thy words  
 The way directing, as a safe escort."

"I was of Lombardy, and Marco call'd: <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *As thou.*] "As if thou wert still living." <sup>2</sup> *I was of Lombardy, and Marco call'd.*] A Venetian gentleman. "Lombardo," both was his surname and denoted the country to which he belonged. G. Villani, lib. vii. cap. cxx., terms him "a wise and worthy courtier." Benvenuto da Imola, says Landino, relates of him, that being imprisoned and not able to pay the price of his ransom, he applied by letter to his friend Riccardo da Camino, lord of Trevigi, for relief. Riccardo set on foot a contribution among several nobles of Lombardy for the purpose; of which when Marco was informed, he wrote back with much indignation to Riccardo, that he had rather die than remain under obligations to so many benefactors. It is added that Riccardo then paid the whole out of his own purse. Of this generous man I have occasion to speak again in the notes to Canto viii. 71, and to Par. Canto ix. 48.

Not inexperienced of the world, that worth  
I still affected, from which all have turn'd  
The nerveless bow aside. Thy course tends right  
Unto the summit": and, replying thus,  
He added, "I beseech thee pray for me,  
When thou shalt come aloft." And I to him:  
"Accept my faith for pledge I will perform  
What thou requirest. Yet one doubt remains,  
That wrings me sorely, if I solve it not.  
Singly before it urged me, doubled now  
By thine opinion, when I couple that  
With one elsewhere<sup>1</sup> declared; each strengthening  
other.

The world indeed is even so forlorn  
Of all good, as thou speak'st it, and so swarms  
With every evil. Yet, beseech thee, point  
The cause out to me, that myself may see,  
And unto others show it: for in heaven  
One places it, and one on earth below."

Then heaving forth a deep and audible sigh,  
"Brother!" he thus began, "the world is blind;  
And thou in truth comest from it. Ye, who live,  
Do so each cause refer to heaven above,  
E'en as its motion, of necessity,  
Drew with it all that moves. If this were so,  
Free choice in you were none; nor justice would  
There should be joy for virtue, woe for ill.  
Your movements have their primal bent from  
heaven;

Not all: yet said I all; what then ensues?  
Light have ye still to follow evil or good,  
And of the will free power, which, if it stand  
Firm and unwearied in Heaven's first assay,  
Conquers at last, so it be cherish'd well,  
Triumphant over all. To mightier force,<sup>2</sup>  
To better nature subject, ye abide

<sup>1</sup> *Elsewhere.*] He refers to what Guido del Duca had said in the fourteenth Canto, concerning the degeneracy of his countrymen.

<sup>2</sup> *To mightier force.*] "Though ye are subject to a higher power than that of the heavenly constellations, even to the power of the great Creator himself, yet ye are still left in the possession of liberty."

Free, not constrain'd by that which forms in you  
 The reasoning mind uninfluenced of the stars.  
 If then the present race of mankind err,  
 Seek in yourselves the cause, and find it there.  
 Herein thou shalt confess me no false spy.

“Forth from his plastic hand, who charm'd beholds  
 Her image ere she yet exist, the soul  
 Comes like a babe, that wantons sportively,  
 Weeping and laughing in its wayward moods ;  
 As artless, and as ignorant of aught,  
 Save that her Maker being one who dwells  
 With gladness ever, willingly she turns  
 To whate'er yields her joy. Of some slight good  
 The flavour soon she tastes ; and, snared by that,  
 With fondness she pursues it ; if no guide  
 Recall, no rein direct her wandering course.  
 Hence it behoved, the law should be a curb ;  
 A sovereign hence behoved, whose piercing view  
 Might mark at least the fortress <sup>1</sup> and main tower  
 Of the true city. Laws indeed there are :  
 But who is he observes them ? None ; not he,  
 Who goes before, the shepherd of the flock,  
 Who <sup>2</sup> chews the cud but doth not cleave the hoof.  
 Therefore the multitude, who see their guide  
 Strike at the very good they covet most,  
 Feed there and look no further. Thus the cause  
 Is not corrupted nature in yourselves,  
 But ill-conducting, that hath turn'd the world  
 To evil. Rome, that turn'd it unto good,  
 Was wont to boast two suns,<sup>3</sup> whose several beams

<sup>1</sup> *The fortress.*] Justice, the most necessary virtue in the chief magistrate, as the commentators for the most part explain it : and it appears manifest from all our Poet says in his first book *De Monarchiâ*, concerning the authority of the temporal Monarch and concerning Justice, that they are right. Yet Lombardi understands the law here spoken of to be the law of God ; *the sovereign*, a spiritual ruler, and *the true city*, the society of true believers ; so that *the fortress*, according to him, denotes the principal parts of Christian duty.

<sup>2</sup> *Who.*] He compares the Pope, on account of the union of the temporal with the spiritual power in his person, to an unclean beast in the Levitical law. “The camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof ; he is unclean unto you.” Lev. xi. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Two suns.*] The Emperor and the Bishop of Rome.

Cast light on either way, the world's and God's.  
 One since hath quench'd the other ; and the sword  
 Is grafted on the crook ; and, so conjoin'd,  
 Each must perforce decline to worse, unawed  
 By fear of other. If thou doubt me, mark  
 The blade : each herb is judged of by its seed.  
 That land,<sup>1</sup> through which Adige and the Po  
 Their waters roll, was once the residence  
 Of courtesy and valour, ere the day<sup>2</sup>  
 That frown'd on Frederick ; now secure may pass  
 Those limits, whosoe'er hath left, for shame,  
 To talk with good men, or come near their haunts.  
 Three aged ones are still found there, in whom  
 The old time chides the new : these deem it long  
 Ere God restore them to a better world :  
 The good Gherardo,<sup>3</sup> of Palazzo he  
 Conrad ;<sup>4</sup> and Guido of Castello,<sup>5</sup> named  
 In Gallic phrase more fitly the plain Lombard.  
 On this at last conclude. The church of Rome,  
 Mixing two governments that ill assort,  
 Hath miss'd her footing, fallen into the mire,  
 And there herself and burden much defiled."

" O Marco ! " I replied, " thine arguments  
 Convince me : and the cause I now discern,  
 Why of the heritage no portion came

<sup>1</sup> *That land.*] Lombardy. <sup>2</sup> *Ere the day.*] Before the Emperor Frederick II. was defeated before Parma, in 1248. G. Villani, lib. vi. cap. xxxv. <sup>3</sup> *The good Gherardo.*] Gherardo da Camino, of Trevigi. He is honourably mentioned in our Poet's Convito, p. 173. " Let us suppose that Gherardo da Camino had been the grandson of the meanest hind that ever drank of the Sile or the Cagnano, and that his grandfather was not yet forgotten ; who will dare to say that Gherardo da Camino was a mean man, and who will not agree with me in calling him noble ? Certainly no one, however presumptuous, will deny this ; for such he was, and as such let him ever be remembered." Tiraboschi supposes him to have been the same Gherardo from whom the Provençal poets were used to meet a hospitable reception. " This is probably that same Gherardo, who, together with his sons, so early as before the year 1254, gave a kind and hospitable reception to the Provençal poets." Mathias's edition, tom. i. p. 137. <sup>4</sup> *Conrad.*] Currado da Palazzo, a gentleman of Brescia. <sup>5</sup> *Guido of Castello.*] Of Reggio. All the Italians were called Lombards by the French. Editor's note : " Il semplice Lombardo." This phrase has another interpretation. Some translators hold that Dante meant to call Guido the " simple " or " guileless Lombard."

To Levi's offspring. But resolve me this :  
 Who that Gherardo is, that as thou say'st  
 Is left a sample of the perish'd race,  
 And for rebuke to this untoward age ? ”

“ Either thy words,” said he, “ deceive, or else  
 Are meant to try me ; that thou, speaking Tuscan,  
 Appear'st not to have heard of good Gherardo ;  
 The sole addition that, by which I know him ;  
 Unless I borrow'd from his daughter Gaïa <sup>1</sup>  
 Another name to grace him. God be with you.  
 I bear you company no more. Behold  
 The dawn with white ray glimmering through the  
 mist.

I must away—the angel comes—ere he  
 Appear.” He said, and would not hear me more.

## CANTO XVII

### ARGUMENT

The Poet issues from that thick vapour ; and soon after his fancy represents to him in lively portraiture some noted examples of anger. This imagination is dissipated by the appearance of an angel, who marshals them onward to the fourth cornice, on which the sin of gloominess or indifference is purged ; and here Virgil shows him that this vice proceeds from a defect of love, and that all love can be only of two sorts, either natural, or of the soul ; of which sorts the former is always right, but the latter may err either in respect of object or of degree.

CALL to remembrance, reader, if thou e'er  
 Hast on an Alpine height been ta'en by cloud,

<sup>1</sup> *His daughter Gaïa.*] A lady equally admired for her modesty, the beauty of her person, and the excellency of her talents. Gaïa, says Tiraboschi, may perhaps lay claim to the praise of having been the first among the Italian ladies, by whom the vernacular poetry was cultivated. This appears (although no one has yet named her as a poetess) from the MS. Commentary on the *Commedia* of Dante, by Giovanni da Serravalle, afterwards Bishop of Fermo, where, commenting on Canto xvi. of the *Purgatorio*, he says : “ De istâ Gaja filiâ dicti boni Gerardi, possent dici multæ laudes, quia fuit prudens domina, literata, magni consilii, et magnæ prudentiæ, maximæ pulchritudinis, quæ scivit bene loqui rhytmatice in vulgari.”

Through which thou saw'st no better than the mole  
 Doth through opacous membrane ; then, whene'er  
 The watery vapours dense began to melt  
 Into thin air, how faintly the sun's sphere  
 Seem'd wading through them : so thy nimble  
 thought

May image, how at first I rebeheld  
 The sun, that bedward now his couch o'erhung.

Thus, with my leader's feet still equaling pace,  
 From forth that cloud I came, when now expired  
 The parting beams from off the nether shores.

O quick and forgetive power ! that sometimes  
 dost

So rob us of ourselves, we take no mark  
 Though round about us thousand trumpets clang ;  
 What moves thee, if the senses stir not ? Light  
 Moves thee from heaven, spontaneous, self-inform'd ;  
 Or, likelier, gliding down with swift illapse  
 By will divine. Portray'd before me came  
 The traces of her dire impiety,  
 Whose form was changed into the bird, that most  
 Delights itself in song<sup>1</sup> : and here my mind  
 Was inwardly so wrapt, it gave no place  
 To aught that ask'd admittance from without.  
 Next shower'd into my fantasy a shape  
 As of one crucified,<sup>2</sup> whose visage spake  
 Fell rancour, malice deep, wherein he died ;  
 And round him Ahasuerus the great king ;  
 Esther his bride ; and Mordecai the just,  
 Blameless in word and deed. As of itself  
 That unsubstantial coinage of the brain  
 Burst, like a bubble, when the water fails

<sup>1</sup> ———— *The bird, that most*

*Delights itself in song.*] I cannot think with Vellutello, that the swallow is here meant. Dante probably alludes to the story of Philomela, as it is found in Homer's *Odyssey*, b. xix. 518, rather than as later poets have told it. "She intended to slay the son of her husband's brother Amphion, incited to it by the envy of his wife, who had six children, while herself had only two, but through mistake slew her own son Itylus, and for her punishment was transformed by Jupiter into a nightingale." <sup>2</sup> *One crucified.*] Haman. See the Book of Esther, c. vii.



That fed it ; in my vision straight uprose  
 A damsel <sup>1</sup> weeping loud, and cried, " O queen !  
 O mother ! wherefore has intemperate ire  
 Driven thee to loathe thy being ? Not to lose  
 Lavinia, desperate thou hast slain thyself.  
 Now hast thou lost me. I am she, whose tears  
 Mourn, ere I fall, a mother's timeless end."

E'en as a sleep breaks off, if suddenly  
 New radiance strike upon the closed lids,  
 The broken slumber quivering ere it dies ; <sup>2</sup>  
 Thus, from before me, sunk that imagery,  
 Vanishing, soon as on my face there struck  
 The light, outshining far our earthly beam.  
 As round I turn'd me to survey what place  
 I had arrived at, " Here ye mount " : exclaim'd  
 A voice, that other purpose left me none  
 Save will so eager to behold who spake,  
 I could not choose but gaze. As 'fore the sun,  
 That weighs our vision down, and veils his form  
 In light transcendent, thus my virtue fail'd  
 Unequal. " This is Spirit from above,  
 Who marshals us our upward way, unsought ;  
 And in his own light shrouds him. As a man  
 Doth for himself, so now is done for us.  
 For whoso waits imploring, yet sees need  
 Of his prompt aidance, sets himself prepared  
 For blunt denial, ere the suit be made.  
 Refuse we not to lend a ready foot  
 At such inviting : haste we to ascend,  
 Before it darken : for we may not then,  
 Till morn again return." So spake my guide ;  
 And to one ladder both address'd our steps ;  
 And the first stair approaching, I perceived  
 Near me as 'twere the waving of a wing,

<sup>1</sup> *A damsel.*] Lavina, mourning for her mother Amata, who, impelled by grief and indignation for the supposed death of Turnus, destroyed herself. *Æn.*, lib. xii. 595. <sup>2</sup> *The broken slumber quivering ere it dies.*] Venturi suggests that this bold and unusual metaphor may have been formed on that in Virgil.

Tempus erat quo prima quies mortalibus ægris  
 Incipit, et dono divûm gratissima serpit.

*Æn.*, lib. ii. 268.

That fann'd my face, and whisper'd: "Blessed  
they,

The peace-makers: <sup>1</sup> they know not evil wrath."

Now to such height above our heads were  
raised

The last beams, follow'd close by hooded night,  
That many a star on all sides through the gloom  
Shone out. "Why partest from me, O my  
strength?"

So with myself I communed; for I felt  
My o'ertoil'd sinews slacken. We had reach'd  
The summit, and were fix'd like to a bark  
Arrived at land. And waiting a short space,  
If aught could meet mine ear in that new round,  
Then to my guide I turn'd, and said: "Loved sire!  
Declare what guilt is on this circle purged.  
If our feet rest, no need thy speech should pause."

He thus to me: "The love <sup>2</sup> of good, whate'er  
Wanted of just proportion, here fulfils.

Here plies afresh the oar, that loiter'd ill.

But that thou mayst yet clearer understand,

Give ear unto my words; and thou shalt cull

Some fruit may please thee well, from this delay.

"Creator, nor created being, e'er,  
My son," he thus began, "was without love,  
Or natural,<sup>3</sup> or the free spirit's growth  
Thou hast not that to learn. The natural still  
Is without error: but the other swerves,  
If on ill object bent, or through excess  
Of vigour, or defect. While e'er it seeks  
The primal blessings,<sup>4</sup> or with measure due  
The inferior,<sup>5</sup> no delight, that flows from it,  
Partakes of ill. But let it warp to evil,  
Or with more ardour than behoves, or less,

<sup>1</sup> *The peace-makers.*] "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. v. 9. <sup>2</sup> *The love.*] "A defect in our love towards God, or lukewarmness in piety, is here removed."

<sup>3</sup> *Or natural.*] Lombardi refers to the Convito, Canz. i. Tratt. 2, cap. 3, where this subject is diffusely treated by our Poet.

<sup>4</sup> *The primal blessings.*] Spiritual good. <sup>5</sup> *The inferior.*] Temporal good.

Pursue the good ; the thing created then  
 Works 'gainst its Maker. Hence thou must infer  
 That love is germin of each virtue in ye,  
 And of each act no less, that merits pain.  
 Now <sup>1</sup> since it may not be, but love intend  
 The welfare mainly of the thing it loves,  
 All from self-hatred are secure ; and since  
 No being can be thought to exist apart,  
 And independent of the first, a bar  
 Of equal force restrains from hating that.

“ Grant the distinction just ; and it remains  
 The evil must be another's, which is loved.  
 Three ways such love is gender'd in your clay.  
 There is <sup>2</sup> who hopes (his neighbour's worth deprest  
 Pre-eminence himself ; and covets hence,  
 For his own greatness, that another fall.  
 There is, <sup>3</sup> who so much fears the loss of power,  
 Fame, favour, glory (should his fellow mount  
 Above him), and so sickens at the thought.  
 He loves their opposite : and there is he, <sup>4</sup>  
 Whom wrong or insult seems to gall and shame,  
 That he doth thirst for vengeance ; and such needs  
 Must dote on other's evil. Here beneath,  
 This threefold love is mourn'd. Of the other sort  
 Be now instructed ; that which follows good,  
 But with disorder'd and irregular course.

“ All indistinctly apprehend a bliss,  
 On which the soul may rest ; the hearts of all  
 Yearn after it ; and to that wished bourn  
 All therefore strive to tend. If ye behold,  
 Or seek it, with a love remiss and lax ;  
 This cornice, after just repenting, lays  
 Its penal torment on ye. Other good  
 There is, where man finds not his happiness :  
 It is not true fruition ; not that blest  
 Essence, of every good the branch and root.

<sup>1</sup> Now.] “ It is impossible for any being, either to hate itself, or to hate the First Cause of all, by which it exists. We can therefore only rejoice in the evil which befalls others.” <sup>2</sup> There is.] The proud. <sup>3</sup> There is.] The envious. <sup>4</sup> There is he.] The resentful.

The love too lavishly bestow'd on this,  
 Along three circles <sup>1</sup> over us, is mourn'd.  
 Account of that division tripartite  
 Expect not, fitter for thine own research."

## CANTO XVIII

### ARGUMENT

Virgil discourses further concerning the nature of love. Then a multitude of spirits rush by ; two of whom in van of the rest, record instances of zeal and fervent affection, and another, who was abbot of San Zeno in Verona, declares himself to Virgil and Dante ; and lastly follow other spirits, shouting forth memorable examples of the sin for which they suffer. The Poet, pursuing his meditations, falls into a dreamy slumber.

THE teacher ended, and his high discourse  
 Concluding, earnest in my looks inquired  
 If I appear'd content ; and I, whom still  
 Unsated thirst to hear him urged, was mute,  
 Mute outwardly, yet inwardly I said :  
 " Perchance my too much questioning offends."  
 But he, true father, mark'd the secret wish  
 By diffidence restrain'd ; and, speaking, gave  
 Me boldness thus to speak : " Master ! my sight  
 Gathers so lively virtue from thy beams,  
 That all, thy words convey, distinct is seen.  
 Wherefore I pray thee, father, whom this heart  
 Holds dearest, thou wouldst deign by proof t' unfold  
 That love, from which, as from their source, thou  
     bring'st  
 All good deeds and their opposite." He then :

<sup>1</sup> *Along three circles.*] According to the allegorical commentators, as Venturi has observed, Reason is represented under the person of Virgil, and Sense under that of Dante. The former leaves to the latter to discover for itself the three carnal sins—avarice, gluttony, and libidinousness ; having already declared the nature of the spiritual sins—pride, envy, anger, and indifference, or lukewarmness in piety, which the Italians call *accidia*, from the Greek word *ἀκηδία*. Lombardi refers to St. Thomas Aquinas, lib. i. Quest. 72, Art. 2, for the division here made by our Poet.

“ To what I now disclose be thy clear ken  
Directed ; and thou plainly shalt behold  
How much those blind have err’d, who make them-  
selves

The guides of men. The soul, created apt  
To love, moves versatile which way soe’er  
Aught pleasing prompts her, soon as she is waked  
By pleasure into act. Of substance true  
Your apprehension <sup>1</sup> forms its counterfeit ;  
And, in you the ideal shape presenting,  
Attracts the soul’s regard. If she, thus drawn,  
Incline toward it ; love is that inclining,  
And a new nature knit by pleasure in ye.  
Then, as the fire points up, and mounting seeks  
His birth-place and his lasting seat, e’en thus  
Enters the captive soul into desire,  
Which is a spiritual motion, that ne’er rests  
Before enjoyment of the thing it loves.  
Enough to show thee, how the truth from those  
Is hidden, who aver all love a thing  
Praise-worthy in itself ; although perhaps <sup>2</sup>  
Its matter seem still good. Yet if the wax  
Be good, it follows not the impression must.”

“ What love is,” I return’d, “ thy words, O  
guide !  
And my own docile mind, reveal. Yet thence

<sup>1</sup> *Your apprehension.*] It is literally, “ Your apprehensive faculty derives intension from a thing really existing, and displays that intension within you, so that it makes the soul turn to it.” The commentators labour in explaining this ; but whatever sense they have elicited, may, I think, be resolved into the words of the translation in the text.  
<sup>2</sup> *Perhaps.*] “ Our author,” Venturi observes, “ uses the language of the Peripatetics, which denominates the *kind* of things, as determinable by many differences, *matter*. Love then, in kind perhaps, appears good ; and it is said *perhaps*, because, strictly speaking, *in kind* there is neither good nor bad, neither praiseworthy nor blameable.” To this Lombardi adds, that what immediately follows, namely, that “ every mark is not good although the wax be so,” answers to this interpretation. For the wax is precisely as the determinable matter, and the mark or impression as the determining form ; and even as the wax, which is either good or at least not bad, may, by being imprinted by a bad figure, acquire the name of bad ; so may love be said generally to be good or at least not bad, and acquire the name of bad by being determined to an unfit object.

New doubts have sprung. For, from without, if  
love

Be offer'd to us, and the spirit knows  
No other footing ; tend she right or wrong,  
Is no desert of hers." He answering thus :  
" What reason here discovers, I have power  
To show thee : that which lies beyond, expect  
From Beatrice, faith not reason's task.  
Spirit,<sup>1</sup> substantial form, with matter join'd,  
Not in confusion mix'd, hath in itself  
Specific virtue of that union born,  
Which is not felt except it work, nor proved,  
But through effect, as vegetable life  
By the green leaf. From whence his intellect  
Deduced its primal notices of things,  
Man therefore knows not, or his appetites  
Their first affections ; such in you, as zeal  
In bees to gather honey ; at the first,  
Volition, meriting nor blame nor praise.  
But o'er each lower faculty supreme,  
That, as she list, are summon'd to her bar,  
Ye have that virtue<sup>2</sup> in you, whose just voice  
Uttereth counsel, and whose word should keep  
The threshold of assent. Here is the source,  
Whence cause of merit in you is derived ;  
E'en as the affections, good or ill, she takes,  
Or severs,<sup>3</sup> winnow'd as the chaff. Those men,<sup>4</sup>  
Who, reasoning, went to depth profoundest, mark'd  
That innate freedom ; and were thence induced  
To leave their moral teaching to the world.  
Grant then, that from necessity arise  
All love that glows within you ; to dismiss  
Or harbour it, the power is in yourselves.

<sup>1</sup> *Spirit.*] The human soul, which differs from that of brutes, inasmuch as though united with the body it has a separate existence of its own.

<sup>2</sup> *That virtue.*] Reason. <sup>3</sup> *Or severs.*] Lest the reader of the original should be misled, it is right to warn him that the word "vigliare" must not be confounded with "vagliare" to winnow, and strictly means "to separate from the straw what remains of the grain after the threshing." The process is distinctly described in the notes on the Decameron, p. 77, ediz. Giunti, 1573, where this passage is referred to. <sup>4</sup> *Those men.*] The great moral philosophers among the heathens.



Remember, Beatrice, in her style,  
 Denominates free choice by eminence  
 The noble virtue ; if in talk with thee  
 She touch upon that theme." The moon, well  
 nigh

To midnight hour belated, made the stars  
 Appear to wink and fade ; and her broad disk  
 Seem'd like a crag <sup>1</sup> on fire, as up the vault <sup>2</sup>  
 That course she journey'd, which the sun then  
 warms ;

When they of Rome behold him at his set  
 Betwixt Sardinia and the Corsic isle.  
 And now the weight, that hung upon my thought,  
 Was lighten'd by the aid of that clear spirit,  
 Who raiseth Andes <sup>3</sup> above Mantua's name.  
 I therefore, when my questions had obtain'd  
 Solution plain and ample, stood as one  
 Musing in dreamy slumber ; but not long  
 Slumber'd ; for suddenly a multitude,  
 The steep already turning from behind,  
 Rush'd on. With fury and like random rout,  
 As echoing on their shores at midnight heard  
 Ismenus and Asopus,<sup>4</sup> for his Thebes  
 If Bacchus' help were needed ; so came these  
 Tumultuous, curving each his rapid step,  
 By eagerness impell'd of holy love.

Soon they o'ertook us ; with such swiftness moved  
 The mighty crowd. Two spirits at their head.

<sup>1</sup> *A crag.*] I have preferred the reading of Landino, *scheggion* "crag," conceiving it to be more poetical than *secchion*, "bucket," which is the common reading. The same cause, the vapours, which the commentators say might give the appearance of increased magnitude to the moon, might also make her seem broken at her rise. Lombardi explains it differently. The moon being, as he says, in the fifth night of her wane, has exactly the figure of a brazen bucket, round at the bottom and open at top ; and, if we suppose it to be all on fire, we shall have besides the form of the moon, her colour also. <sup>2</sup> *Up the vault.*] The moon passed with a motion opposite to that of the heavens, through the constellation of the Scorpion, in which the sun is, when to those who are in Rome he appears to set between the isles of Corsica and Sardinia. <sup>3</sup> *Andes.*] Andes, now Pietola, made more famous than Mantua, near which it is situated, by having been the birthplace of Virgil. <sup>4</sup> *Ismenus and Asopus.*] Rivers near Thebes.

Cried, weeping, "Blessed Mary<sup>1</sup> sought with haste  
The hilly region. Cæsar,<sup>2</sup> to subdue  
Ilerda, darted in Marseilles his sting,  
And flew to Spain."—"Oh, tarry not: away!"  
The others shouted: "let not time be lost  
Through slackness of affection. Hearty zeal  
To serve reanimates celestial grace."

"O ye! in whom intenser fervency  
Haply supplies, where lukewarm erst ye fail'd,  
Slow or neglectful, to absolve your part  
Of good and virtuous; this man, who yet lives,  
(Credit my tale, though strange), desires to ascend,  
So morning rise to light us. Therefore say  
Which hand leads nearest to the rifted rock."

So spake my guide; to whom a shade return'd:  
"Come after us, and thou shalt find the cleft.  
We may not linger: such resistless will  
Speeds our unwearied course. Vouchsafe us then  
Thy pardon, if our duty seem to thee  
Discourteous rudeness. In Verona I  
Was abbot<sup>3</sup> of San Zeno, when the hand  
Of Barbarossa grasp'd imperial sway,  
That name ne'er utter'd without tears in Milan  
And there is he,<sup>4</sup> hath one foot in his grave,  
Who for that monastery ere long shall weep,  
Ruining his power misused; for that his son,  
Of body ill compact, and worse in mind,  
And born in evil, he hath set in place  
Of its true pastor." Whether more he spake,  
Or here was mute, I know not: he had sped  
E'en now so far beyond us. Yet this much  
I heard, and in remembrance treasured it.

<sup>1</sup> *Mary.*] "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth." Luke i. 39, 40. <sup>2</sup> *Cæsar.*] See Lucan, Phars. lib. iii. and iv., and Cæsar, de Bello Civili, lib. i. Cæsar left Brutus to complete the siege of Marseilles, and hastened on to the attack of Afranius and Petreius, the generals of Pompey, at Ilerda (Lérida) in Spain. <sup>3</sup> *Abbot.*] Alberto, Abbot of San Zeno in Verona, when Frederick I. was emperor, by whom Milan was besieged and reduced to ashes, in 1162. <sup>4</sup> *There is he.*] Alberto della Scala, Lord of Verona, who had made his natural son Abbot of San Zeno.

He then, who never fail'd me at my need,  
 Cried, "Hither turn. Lo! two with sharp remorse  
 Chiding their sin." In rear of all the troop  
 These shouted: "First they died,<sup>1</sup> to whom the sea  
 Open'd, or ever Jordan saw his heirs:  
 And they,<sup>2</sup> who with Æneas to the end  
 Endured not suffering, for their portion chose  
 Life without glory." Soon as they had fled  
 Past reach of sight, new thought within me rose  
 By others follow'd fast, and each unlike  
 Its fellow: till led on from thought to thought,  
 And pleased with the fleeting train, mine eye  
 Was closed, and meditation changed to dream.

## CANTO XIX

## ARGUMENT

The Poet, after describing his dream, relates how, at the summoning of an angel, he ascends with Virgil to the fifth cornice, where the sin of avarice is cleansed, and where he finds Pope Adrian the fifth.

It was the hour,<sup>3</sup> when of diurnal heat  
 No reliques chafe the cold beams of the moon,  
 O'erpower'd by earth, or planetary sway  
 Of Saturn; and the geomancer<sup>4</sup> sees  
 His Greater Fortune up the east ascend,  
 Where grey dawn checkers first the shadowy cone;  
 When, 'fore me in my dream, a woman's shape<sup>5</sup>  
 There came, with lips that stammer'd, eyes aslant,  
 Distorted feet, hands maim'd, and colour pale.

I look'd upon her: and, as sunshine cheers

<sup>1</sup> *First they died.*] The Israelites, who on account of their disobedience died before reaching the promised land. <sup>2</sup> *And they.*] Those

Trojans, who, wearied with their voyage, chose rather to remain in Sicily with Acestes, than accompany Æneas to Italy. Virg., Æn. lib. v.

<sup>3</sup> *The hour.*] Near the dawn. <sup>4</sup> *The geomancer.*] The geo-

mancers, says Landino, when they divined, drew a figure consisting of sixteen marks, named from so many stars which constitute the end of Aquarius and the beginning of Pisces. One of these they called "the greater fortune." <sup>5</sup> *A woman's shape.*] Worldly happiness.

Limbs numb'd by nightly cold, e'en thus my look  
 Unloosed her tongue ; next, in brief space, her form  
 Decrepit raised erect, and faded face  
 With love's own hue illumed. Recovering speech,  
 She forthwith, warbling, such a strain began,  
 That I, how loth soe'er, could scarce have held  
 Attention from the song. " I," thus she sang,  
 " I am the Syren, she, whom mariners  
 On the wide sea are wilder'd when they hear :  
 Such fulness of delight the listener feels.  
 I, from his course, Ulysses <sup>1</sup> by my lay  
 Enchanted drew. Whoe'er frequents me once,  
 Parts seldom : so I charm him, and his heart  
 Contented knows no void." Or ere her mouth  
 Was closed, to shame her, at my side appear'd  
 A dame <sup>2</sup> of semblance holy. With stern voice  
 She utter'd : " Say, O Virgil ! who is this ? "  
 Which hearing, he approach'd, with eyes still bent  
 Toward that goodly presence : the other seized her,  
 And, her robes tearing, open'd her before,  
 And show'd the belly to me, whence a smell,  
 Exhaling loathsome, waked me. Round I turn'd  
 Mine eyes : and thus the teacher : " At the least  
 Three times my voice hath call'd thee. Rise, begone.  
 Let us the opening find where thou mayst pass."

I straightway rose. Now day, pour'd down from  
 high,  
 Fill'd all the circuits of the sacred mount ;  
 And, as we journey'd, on our shoulder smote  
 The early ray. I follow'd, stooping low  
 My forehead, as a man, o'ercharged with thought,  
 Who bends him to the likeness of an arch  
 That midway spans the flood ; when thus I heard,  
 " Come enter here," in tone so soft and mild,

<sup>1</sup> *Ulysses.*] It is not easy to determine why Ulysses, contrary to the authority of Homer, is said to have been drawn aside from his course by the song of the Syren. No improbable way of accounting for the contradiction is, to suppose that she is here represented as purposely deviating from the truth. Or Dante may have followed some legend of the Middle Ages, in which the wanderings of Ulysses were represented otherwise than in Homer. <sup>2</sup> *A dame.*] Philosophy, or perhaps Truth.

As never met the ear on mortal strand.

With swan-like wings dispreed and pointing up,  
Who thus had spoken marshal'd us along,  
Where, each side of the solid masonry,  
The sloping walls retired ; then moved his plumes,  
And fanning us, affirm'd that those, who mourn,<sup>1</sup>  
Are blessed, for that comfort shall be theirs.

"What aileth thee, that still thou look'st to earth?"  
Began my leader ; while the angelic shape  
A little over us his station took.<sup>2</sup>

"New vision," I replied, "hath raised in me  
Surmisings strange and anxious doubts, whereon  
My soul intent allows no other thought  
Or room, or entrance."—"Hast thou seen," said he,  
"That old enchantress, her, whose wiles alone  
The spirits o'er us weep for? Hast thou seen  
How man may free him of her bonds? Enough.  
Let thy heels spurn the earth, and thy raised ken  
Fix on the lure, which heaven's eternal King  
Whirls in the rolling spheres." As on his feet  
The falcon first looks down, then to the sky  
Turns, and forth stretches eager for the food,  
That woos him thither ; so the call I heard :  
So onward, far as the dividing rock  
Gave way, I journey'd, till the plain was reach'd.

On the fifth circle when I stood at large,  
A race appear'd before me, on the ground  
All downward lying prone and weeping sore.  
"My soul<sup>3</sup> hath cleaved to the dust," I heard  
With sighs so deep, they well nigh choked the words.

"O ye elect of God ! whose penal woes  
Both hope and justice mitigate, direct  
Towards the steep rising our uncertain way."

"If ye approach secure from this our doom,  
Prostration, and would urge your course with speed,

<sup>1</sup> *Who mourn.*] "Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted." Matt. v. 4.    <sup>2</sup> Editor's note: *A little over us his station took.*] "Poco ambo e due dall' angel sormontati." I think the right translation of this would be: "We had both climbed a little higher than the angel's station."    <sup>3</sup> *My soul.*] "My soul cleaveth to the dust : quicken thou me according to Thy word." Ps. cxix. 25.

See that ye still to rightward keep the brink."

So them the bard besought ; and such the words,  
Beyond us some short space, in answer came.

I noted what remain'd yet hidden from them : <sup>1</sup>  
Thence to my liege's eyes mine eyes I bent,  
And he, forthwith interpreting their suit,  
Beckon'd his glad assent. Free then to act  
As pleased me, I drew near, and took my stand  
Over that shade whose words I late had mark'd.  
And, " Spirit ! " I said, " in whom repentant tears  
Mature that blessed hour when thou with God  
Shalt find acceptance, for a while suspend  
For me that mightier care. Say who thou wast ;  
Why thus ye grovel on your bellies prone ;  
And if, in aught, ye wish my service there,  
Whence living I am come." He answering spake :  
" The cause why Heaven our back toward His  
cope

Reverses, shalt thou know : but me know first,  
The successor of Peter,<sup>2</sup> and the name  
And title of my lineage, from that stream <sup>3</sup>  
That 'twixt Chiaveri and Siestri draws  
His limpid waters through the lowly glen.  
A month and little more by proof I learnt,  
With what a weight that robe of sovereignty  
Upon his shoulder rests, who from the mire  
Would guard it ; that each other fardel seems  
But feathers in the balance. Late, alas !  
Was my conversion : but, when I became  
Rome's pastor, I discerned at once the dream  
And cozenage of life ; saw that the heart  
Rested not there, and yet no prouder height  
Lured on the climber : wherefore, of that life  
No more enamour'd, in my bosom love

<sup>1</sup> *I noted what remain'd yet hidden from them.*] They were ignorant, it appeared, whether Dante was come there to be purged of his sins.

<sup>2</sup> *The successor of Peter.*] Ottobuono, of the family of Fieschi, Counts of Lavagno, died thirty-nine days after he became Pope, with the title of Adrian v. in 1276. <sup>3</sup> *That stream.*] The river Lavagno, in the Genoese territory ; to the east of which territory are situated Siestri and Chiaveri.



Of purer being kindled. For till then  
 I was a soul in misery, alienate  
 From God, and covetous of all earthly things ;  
 Now, as thou seest, here punish'd for my doting.  
 Such cleansing from the taint of avarice,  
 Do spirits, converted, need. This mount inflicts  
 No direr penalty. E'en as our eyes  
 Fasten'd below, nor e'er to loftier clime  
 Were lifted ; <sup>1</sup> thus hath justice level'd us,  
 Here on the earth. As avarice quench'd our love  
 Of good, without which is no working ; thus  
 Here justice holds us prison'd, hand and foot  
 Chain'd down and bound, while heaven's just Lord  
 shall please,

So long to tarry, motionless, outstretch'd."

My knees I stoop'd, and would have spoke ; but he,  
 Ere my beginning, by his ear perceived  
 I did him reverence ; and " What cause," said he,  
 " Hath how'd thee thus ? "—" Compunction," I  
 rejoin'd,

" And inward awe of your high dignity."

" Up," he exclaim'd, " brother ! upon thy feet  
 Arise ; err not : <sup>2</sup> thy fellow-servant I  
 (Thine and all others'), of one sovran Power.  
 If thou hast ever mark'd those holy sounds  
 Of gospel truth, ' nor shall be given in marriage,' <sup>3</sup>  
 Thou mayst discern the reasons of my speech.  
 Go thy ways now ; and linger here no more.  
 Thy tarrying is a let unto the tears,  
 With which I hasten that whereof thou spakest. <sup>4</sup>  
 I have on earth a kinswoman ; <sup>5</sup> her name

<sup>1</sup> *Were lifted.*] Rosa Morando and Lombardi are very severe on Venturi's perplexity occasioned by the word " aderse." They have none of them noticed Landino's reading of " aperse." Ediz. 1484.

<sup>2</sup> *Err not.*] " And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." Rev. xix. 10. <sup>3</sup> *Nor shall be given in marriage.*] " Since in this state we neither marry nor are given in marriage, I am no longer the spouse of the Church, and therefore no longer retain my former dignity." See Matt. xxii. 30. <sup>4</sup> *That whereof thou spakest.*] See v. 89. <sup>5</sup> *A kinswoman.*]

Alagia is said to have been the wife of the Marchese Marcello Malaspina, one of the Poet's protectors during his exile. See Canto viii. 133.

Alagia, worthy in herself, so ill  
 Example of our house corrupt her not :  
 And she is all remaineth of me there."

## CANTO XX

## ARGUMENT

Among those on the fifth cornice, Hugh Capet records illustrious examples of voluntary poverty and of bounty ; then tells who himself is, and speaks of his descendants on the French throne ; and, lastly, adds some noted instances of avarice. When he has ended, the mountain shakes, and all the spirits sing "Glory to God."

ILL strives the will, 'gainst will more wise that  
 strives :

His pleasure therefore to mine own preferr'd,  
 I drew the sponge <sup>1</sup> yet thirsty from the wave.

Onward I moved : he also onward moved,  
 Who led me, coasting still, wherever place  
 Along the rock was vacant ; as a man  
 Walks near the battlements on narrow wall.  
 For those on the other part, who drop by drop  
 Wring out their all-infecting malady,  
 Too closely press the verge. Accurst be thou,  
 Inveterate wolf ! <sup>2</sup> whose gorge ingluts more prey,  
 Than every beast beside, yet is not fill'd ;  
 So bottomless thy maw.—Ye spheres of heaven !  
 To whom there are, as seems, who attribute  
 All change in mortal state, when is the day  
 Of his appearing, <sup>3</sup> for whom fate reserves  
 To chase her hence ?—With wary steps and slow  
 We pass'd ; and I attentive to the shades,  
 Whom piteously I heard lament and wail ;  
 And, 'midst the wailing, one before us heard

<sup>1</sup> *I drew the sponge.*] "I did not persevere in my inquiries from the spirit, though still anxious to learn more." <sup>2</sup> *Wolf.*] Avarice.

<sup>3</sup> *Of his appearing.*] He is thought to allude to Can Grande della Scala. See Inf., Canto i. 98.

Cry out "O blessed Virgin!" as a dame  
 In the sharp pangs of childbed; and "How poor  
 Thou wast," it added, "witness that low roof  
 Where thou didst lay thy sacred burden down.  
 O good Fabricius! <sup>1</sup> thou didst virtue choose  
 With poverty, before great wealth with vice."

The words so pleased me, that desire to know  
 The spirit, from whose lip they seem'd to come,  
 Did draw me onward. Yet it spake the gift  
 Of Nicholas, <sup>2</sup> which on the maidens he  
 Bounteous bestow'd, to save their youthful prime  
 Unblemish'd. "Spirit! who dost speak of deeds  
 So worthy, tell me who thou wast," I said,  
 "And why thou dost with single voice renew  
 Memorial of such praise. That boon vouchsafed  
 Haply shall meet reward; if I return  
 To finish the short pilgrimage of life,  
 Still speeding to its close on restless wing."

"I," answer'd he, "will tell thee; not for help,  
 Which thence I look for; but that in thyself  
 Grace so exceeding shines, before thy time  
 Of mortal dissolution. I was root <sup>3</sup>  
 Of that ill plant whose shade such poison sheds  
 O'er all the Christian land, that seldom thence  
 Good fruit is gather'd. Vengeance soon should  
 come,  
 Had Ghent and Douay, Lille and Bruges power; <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fabricius.*] So our author in the second book of the *De Monarchiâ*, p. 121. "Nonne Fabricium, &c." "Has not Fabricius given us another example of resisting avarice, when, poor as he was, he preserved his faith to the republic, and rejected with scorn a great sum of gold that was offered him?"

In the same book Dante quotes these words of Virgil (*Æn. vi.*):

"——— Parvoque potentem  
 Fabricium."

<sup>2</sup> *Nicholas.*] The story of Nicholas is, that an angel having revealed to him that the father of a family was so impoverished as to resolve on exposing the chastity of his three daughters to sale, he threw in at the window of their house three bags of money, containing a sufficient portion for each of them. <sup>3</sup> *Root.*] Hugh Capet, ancestor of Philip iv. <sup>4</sup> *Had Ghent and Douay, Lille and Bruges power.*] These cities had lately been seized by Philip iv. The spirit is made to intimate the approaching defeat of the French army by the Flemings, in the battle of Courtrai, which happened in 1302.

And vengeance I of heaven's great Judge implore.

Hugh Capet was I hight : from me descend  
The Philips and the Louis, of whom France  
Newly is govern'd : born of one who plied  
The slaughterer's trade<sup>1</sup> at Paris. When the  
race

Of ancient kings had vanish'd (all save one<sup>2</sup>  
Wrapt up in sable weeds) within my gripe  
I found the reins of empire, and such powers  
Of new acquirement, with full store of friends,  
That soon the widow'd circlet of the crown  
Was girt upon the temples of my son,<sup>3</sup>  
He, from whose bones the anointed race begins.  
Till the great dower of Provence<sup>4</sup> had removed  
The stains,<sup>5</sup> that yet obscured our lowly blood,  
Its sway indeed was narrow ; but howe'er  
It wrought no evil : there, with force and lies,  
Began its rapine : after, for amends,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The slaughterer's trade.*] This reflection on the birth of his ancestor, induced Francis I. to forbid the reading of Dante in his dominions. Hugh Capet, who came to the throne of France in 987, was however the grandson of Robert, who was the brother of Eudes, King of France in 888 ; and it may, therefore, well be questioned, whether by Beccaio di Parigi is meant literally one who carried on the trade of a butcher, at Paris, and whether the sanguinary disposition of Hugh Capet's father is not stigmatized by this opprobrious appellation. See Cancellieri, Osservazioni, &c. Roma, 1814, p. 6. <sup>2</sup> *All save one.*] The posterity of Charlemagne, the second race of French monarchs, had failed, with the exception of Charles of Lorraine, who is said, on account of the melancholy temper of his mind, to have always clothed himself in black. Venturi suggests that Dante may have confounded him with Childeric III., the last of the Merovingian, or first race, who was deposed and made a monk in 751. <sup>3</sup> *My son.*] Hugh Capet caused his son Robert to be crowned at Orleans. <sup>4</sup> *The great dower of Provence.*] Louis IX. and his brother Charles of Anjou, married two of the four daughters of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence. See Par. c. vi. 135. <sup>5</sup> *The stains.*] Lombardi understands this differently from all the other commentators with whom I am acquainted. The word "vergogna" he takes in the sense of "a praise-worthy shame of doing ill" ; and according to him the translation should run thus :

The shame that yet restrain'd my race from ill.

By "Provenza" he understands the estates of Toulouse, the dowry of the only daughter of Raymond, Count of Toulouse, married to a brother of Louis IX.

<sup>6</sup> *For amends.*] This is ironical.

Poitou it seized, Navarre and Gascony.<sup>1</sup>  
To Italy came Charles ; and for amends,

<sup>1</sup> *Poitou it seized, Navarre and Gascony.*] I venture to read:

Pottl e Navarra prese e Guascogna,  
instead of Ponti e Normandia prese e Guascogna.  
Seized Ponthieu, Normandy, and Gascony.

Landino has "Pottl," and he is probably right : for Poitou was annexed to the French crown by Philip iv. See Henault, *Abrégé Chron.* A.D. 1283, &c. Normandy had been united to it long before by Philip Augustus, a circumstance of which it is difficult to imagine that Dante should have been ignorant ; but Philip iv., says Henault, *ibid.*, took the title of King of Navarre : and the subjugation of Navarre is also alluded to in the *Paradiso*, Canto xix. 140. In 1293, Philip iv. summoned Edward I. to do him homage for the duchy of Gascony, which he had conceived the design of seizing. See G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. iv. The whole passage has occasioned much perplexity. I cannot withhold from my readers the advantage of an attempt made to unravel it by the late Archdeacon Fisher, which that gentleman, though a stranger, had the goodness to communicate to me in the following terms : "I am encouraged to offer you an elucidation of a passage, with the interpretation of which I was never yet satisfied. As it goes to establish the accuracy of two very happy conjectures which you have made at *Purg.* xx. 66, you will perhaps forgive me, if my notion a little militates against your solution of the difficulty. The passage is as follows :—

Io fui radice della mala pianta,  
Che la terra cristiana tutta aduggia,  
Sì che buon frutto rado se ne schianta.  
Ma se Doagio, Lilla, Guanto, e Bruggia  
Potesser, tosto ne saria vendetta :  
Ed io la cheggio a lui, che tutto giuggia.

Mentre che la gran dote Provenzale  
Al sangue mio non tolse la vergogna,  
Poco valea, ma pur non facea male.  
Lì cominciò con forza e con menzogna  
La sua rapina ; e poscia, per ammenda,  
Pottl e Navarra prese, e Guascogna.

It is my persuasion that the stanzas I have copied are *one* passage, continuous in its sense, interrupted only by a parenthesis of four stanzas, which are introduced as necessary to the political solution of the meaning. Again, I think that my quoted stanzas refer to only one person, and that Philip iv. of France. He is depicted by both the phrases, *mala pianta*, and *sangue mio*. I do not find that Louis ix. obtained any part of Provence by dowry, owing to his marriage with the daughter of the prince of that country ; at least nothing equivalent to the words *la gran dote Provenzale*. I suppose the stanzas quoted to depict the three great events in the life of Philip iv. He married, during the life of his father, the heiress of the kingdom of Navarre, and also of the duchy of Champagne. Philip obtained at once the sovereignty of both these dowries, and left to his son Philip v. the title of King of France and Navarre. On the accession of Philip iv. to the throne, he became embroiled with the English respecting the duchy of Guienne, which, after having changed masters frequently, was

Young Conradine,<sup>1</sup> an innocent victim, slew ;  
 And sent the angelic teacher<sup>2</sup> back to heaven,  
 Still for amends. I see the time at hand,  
 That forth from France invites another Charles<sup>3</sup>  
 To make himself and kindred better known.  
 Unarm'd he issues, saving with that lance,  
 Which the arch-traitor tilted with ;<sup>4</sup> and that

then in the possession of Edward I. The word Guienne included Poitou and Gascony, and was generally the country termed by Cæsar, Aquitania. By perfidy, and the childish ignorance of Edmund, the brother of Edward I., Philip got possession of Guienne. . . . The duchy of Champagne, now annexed to the crown of France, lying adjacent to that of Flanders, Philip next endeavoured to lay hands on that fief ; and failing in treacherous negotiation, he carried a cruel and murderous war into the low countries, and laid them desolate. His progress was stopped by the Flemings at the battle of Courtrai, and he was soon after compelled to surrender Guienne to the English king, and to make peace with his numerous enemies. Now to these three leading epochs of Philip's life, the Poet seems to allude. Doagio, Lilla, Guanto, e Bruggia refer to his desolating war in Flanders ; Vendetta, to the battle of Courtrai ; la gran dote Provenzale, to the dowry of the kingdom of Navarre and the duchy of Champagne ; forza e menzogna, to his conduct, respecting Guienne with its two sister provinces, as you so convincingly conjectured, Pottl e Guascogna."

<sup>1</sup> *Young Conradine.*] Charles of Anjou put Conradino to death in 1268, and became King of Naples. See Inf., Canto xxviii. 16, and note. <sup>2</sup> *The angelic teacher.*] St. Thomas Aquinas. He was reported to have been poisoned by a physician, who wished to ingratiate himself with Charles of Anjou. "In the year 1323, at the end of July, by the said Pope John and by his cardinals, was canonized at Avignon Thomas Aquinas, of the order of Saint Dominic, a master in divinity and philosophy, a man most excellent in all science, and who expounded the sense of Scripture better than any one since the time of Augustine. He lived in the time of Charles I., King of Sicily ; and going to the council at Lyons, it is said that he was killed by a physician of the said king, who put poison for him into some sweetmeats, thinking to ingratiate himself with King Charles, because he was of the lineage of the lords of Aquino, who had rebelled against the king, and doubting lest he should be made cardinal : whence the Church of God received great damage. He died at the abbey of Fossanova, in Campagna." G. Villani, lib. ix. cap. cexviii. We shall find him in the Paradiso, Canto x. <sup>3</sup> *Another Charles.*] Charles of Valois, brother of Philip IV., was sent by Pope Boniface VIII. to settle the disturbed state of Florence. In consequence of the measures he adopted for that purpose, our Poet and his friends were condemned to exile and death. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. xlvi.

<sup>4</sup> ——— with that lance,

Which the arch-traitor tilted with.]

———— con la lancia

Con la qual giostrò Giuda.

If I remember right, in one of the old romances, Judas is represented tilting with our Saviour.



He carries with so home a thrust, as rives  
 The bowels of poor Florence. No increase  
 Of territory hence, but sin and shame  
 Shall be his guerdon ; and so much the more  
 As he more lightly deems of such foul wrong.  
 I see the other <sup>1</sup> (who a prisoner late  
 Had stept on shore) exposing to the mart  
 His daughter, whom he bargains for, as do  
 The Corsairs for their slaves. O avarice !  
 What canst thou more, who hast subdued our  
 blood  
 So wholly to thyself, they feel no care  
 Of their own flesh ? To hide with direr guilt  
 Past ill and future, lo ! the flower-de-luce <sup>2</sup>  
 Enters Alagna ; in his Vicar Christ  
 Himself a captive, and His mockery  
 Acted again. Lo ! to His holy lip  
 The vinegar and gall once more applied ;  
 And He 'twixt living robbers doom'd to bleed.  
 Lo ! the new Pilate, of whose cruelty  
 Such violence cannot fill the measure up,  
 With no decree to sanction, pushes on

<sup>1</sup> *The other.*] Charles, King of Naples, the eldest son of Charles of Anjou, having, contrary to the directions of his father, engaged with Ruggier de Lauria, the admiral of Peter of Arragon, was made prisoner, and carried into Sicily, June 1284. He afterwards, in consideration of a large sum of money, married his daughter to Azzo VIII., Marquis of Ferrara. I take Lauria to be the hero meant by Petrarch in his *Triumph of Fame*:

Quel di Luria seguiva il Saladino. Cap. ii. v. 151.

Of whom Biagioli says in a note, "Non so chi sia, e non trovo nè vivo nè morto chi mel dica." "I know not who he is, and I find no one alive or dead to tell me." Mariana, lib. xiv. cap. 10, calls Lauria "a brave captain, signalized by his former victories." See also the seventh book of G. Villani's History, and Boccaccio's *Decameron*, G. 5, N. 6 ; where he is named Ruggieri dell' Oria. <sup>2</sup> *The flower-de-luce.*] Boniface VIII. was seized at Alagna in Campagna, by the order of Philip IV., in the year 1303, and soon after died of grief. G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. lxiii. "As it pleased God, the heart of Boniface being petrified with grief, through the injury he had sustained, when he came to Rome, he fell into a strange malady, for he gnawed himself as one frantic, and in this state expired." His character is strongly drawn by the annalist in the next chapter. Thus, says Landino, was verified the prophecy of Celestine respecting him, that he should enter on the popedom like a fox, reign like a lion, and die like a dog.

Into the temple <sup>1</sup> his yet eager sails.

“ O sovran Master ! when shall I rejoice  
To see the vengeance, which thy wrath, well-pleased,  
In secret silence broods ?—While daylight lasts,  
So long what thou didst hear <sup>2</sup> of her, sole spouse  
Of the Great Spirit, and on which thou turn’dst  
To me for comment, is the general theme  
Of all our prayers : but, when it darkens, then  
A different strain we utter ; then record  
Pygmalion,<sup>3</sup> whom his gluttonous thirst of gold  
Made traitor, robber, parricide : the woes  
Of Midas, which his greedy wish ensued,  
Mark’d for derision to all future times :  
And the fond Achan,<sup>4</sup> how he stole the prey,  
That yet he seems by Joshua’s ire pursued.  
Sapphira with her husband next we blame ;  
And praise the fore feet, that with furious ramp  
Spurn’d Heliodorus.<sup>5</sup> All the mountain round  
Rings with the infamy of Thracia’s king,<sup>6</sup>  
Who slew his Phrygian charge : and last a shout  
Ascends : ‘ Declare, O Crassus ! <sup>7</sup> for thou know’st,  
‘ The flavour of thy gold.’ The voice of each  
Now high, now low, as each his impulse prompts,  
Is led through many a pitch, acute or grave.  
Therefore, not singly, I erewhile rehearsed  
That blessedness we tell of in the day :  
But near me, none, beside, his accent raised.”

From him we now had parted, and essay’d  
With utmost efforts to surmount the way ;

<sup>1</sup> *Into the temple.*] It is uncertain whether our Poet alludes still to the event mentioned in the preceding note, or to the destruction of the order of the Templars in 1310, but the latter appears more probable.

<sup>2</sup> *What thou didst hear.*] See v. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Pygmalion.*] ——— Ille Sychæum

Impius ante aras, atque auri cæcus amore,  
Clam ferro incautum superat. Virg., *Æn.* l. 1, 350.

<sup>4</sup> *Achan.*] Josh. vii. <sup>5</sup> *Heliodorus.*] “ For there appeared unto them an horse, with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely and smote at Heliodorus with his fore feet.” 2 Macc. iii. 25. <sup>6</sup> *Thracia’s king.*] Polymnestor, the murderer of Polydorus. Inf., Canto xxx. 19. <sup>7</sup> *Crassus.*] Marcus Crassus, who fell miserably in the Parthian war. See Appian, *Parthica*.

When I did feel, as nodding to its fall,  
 The mountain tremble ; whence an icy chill  
 Seized on me, as on one to death convey'd.  
 So shook not Delos, when Latona there  
 Couch'd to bring forth the twin-born eyes of heaven.

Forthwith from every side a shout arose  
 So vehement, that suddenly my guide  
 Drew near, and cried : " Doubt not, while I conduct  
 thee."

" Glory ! " all shouted (such the sounds mine ear  
 Gather'd from those, who near me swell'd the sounds)  
 " Glory in the highest be to God." We stood  
 Immoveably suspended, like to those,  
 The shepherds, who first heard in Bethlehem's field  
 That song : till ceased the trembling, and the song  
 Was ended : then our hallow'd path resumed,  
 Eying the prostrate shadows, who renew'd  
 Their custom'd mourning. Never in my breast  
 Did ignorance so struggle with desire  
 Of knowledge, if my memory do not err,  
 As in that moment ; nor through haste dared I  
 To question, nor myself could aught discern.  
 So on I fared, in thoughtfulness and dread.

## CANTO XXI

### ARGUMENT

The two Poets are overtaken by the spirit of Statius, who, being cleansed, is on his way to Paradise, and who explains the cause of the mountain shaking, and of the hymn ; his joy at beholding Virgil.

THE natural thirst, ne'er quench'd but from the well <sup>1</sup>  
 Whereof the woman of Samaria craved,  
 Excited ; haste, along the cumber'd path,  
 After my guide, impell'd ; and pity moved  
 My bosom for the 'vengeful doom though just.

<sup>1</sup> *The well.*] " The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not." John iv. 15.

When lo ! even as Luke <sup>1</sup> relates, that Christ  
 Appear'd unto the two upon their way,  
 New-risen from His vaulted grave ; to us  
 A shade appear'd, and after us approach'd,  
 Contemplating the crowd beneath its feet.  
 We were not ware of it ; so first it spake,  
 Saying, " God give you peace, my brethren ! " then  
 Sudden we turn'd : and Virgil such salute,  
 As fitted that kind greeting, gave ; and cried :  
 " Peace in the blessed council be thy lot,  
 Awarded by that righteous court which me  
 To everlasting banishment exiles."

" How ! " he exclaim'd, nor from his speed mean-  
 while

Desisting ; <sup>2</sup> " If that ye be spirits whom God  
 Vouchsafes not room above ; who up the height  
 Has been thus far your guide ? " To whom the  
 bard :

" If thou observe the tokens, <sup>3</sup> which this man,  
 Traced by the finger of the angel, bears ;  
 'Tis plain that in the kingdom of the just  
 He needs must share. But sithence she, <sup>4</sup> whose wheel  
 Spins day and night, for him not yet had drawn  
 That yarn, which on the fatal distaff piled,  
 Clotho apportions to each wight that breathes ;  
 His soul, that sister is to mine and thine,  
 Not of herself could mount ; for not like ours  
 Her ken : whence I, from forth the ample gulf  
 Of hell, was ta'en, to lead him, and will lead  
 Far as my lore avails. But, if thou know,  
 Instruct us for what cause, the mount erewhile

<sup>1</sup> *Luke.*] Chap. xxiv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> ——— *nor from his speed meanwhile*

*Desisting.*] The unintelligible reading of almost all the editions here (but not of all, as Lombardi would lead us to suppose, except his favourite Nidobeatina) is :

E perchè andate forte ?

Vellutello has also that which is no doubt the right :

E parte andava forte.

<sup>3</sup> *The tokens.*] The letter P for Peccata, sins, inscribed upon his forehead by the angel, in order to his being cleared of them in his passage through Purgatory to Paradise. <sup>4</sup> *She.*] Lachesis, one of the three Fates.

Thus shook, and trembled : wherefore all at once  
Seem'd shouting, even from his wave-wash'd foot."

That questioning so tallied with my wish,  
The thirst did feel abatement of its edge  
E'en from expectance. He forthwith replied :  
" In its devotion, nought irregular  
This mount can witness, or by punctual rule  
Unsanction'd ; here from every change exempt,  
Other than that, which heaven in itself  
Doth of itself receive,<sup>1</sup> no influence  
Can reach us. Tempest none, shower, hail, or snow,  
Hoar frost, or dewy moistness, higher falls  
Than that brief scale of threefold steps : thick clouds,  
Nor scudding rack, are ever seen : swift glance  
Ne'er lightens ; nor Thaumantian<sup>2</sup> Iris gleams,  
That yonder often shifts on each side heaven.  
Vapour adust doth never mount above  
The highest of the trinal stairs, whereon  
Peter's vicegerent stands. Lower perchance,  
With various motion rock'd, trembles the soil :  
But here, through wind in earth's deep hollow pent,  
I know not how, yet never trembled : then  
Trembles, when any spirit feels itself  
So purified, that it may rise, or move  
For rising ; and such loud acclaim ensues.  
Purification, by the will alone,  
Is proved, that free to change society  
Seizes the soul rejoicing in her will.  
Desire of bliss is present from the first ;  
But strong propension hinders, to that wish<sup>3</sup>  
By the just ordinance of heaven opposed ;

<sup>1</sup> ——— that, which heaven in itself

Doth of itself receive.] Venturi, I think rightly, interprets this to be light.

<sup>2</sup> Thaumantian.] Figlia di Taumante.

Θαύμαντος θυγάτηρ.

Hesiod, Theog. 780.

Compare Plato, Theæt. v. ii, p. 76, Bip. edit. Virg., Æn. ix. 5.

<sup>3</sup> To that wish.] Lombardi here alters the sense by reading with the Nidobeatina, "con tal voglia," instead of "contra voglia," and explains it : "With the same ineffectual will, with which man was contrary to sin, while he resolved on sinning, even with the same, would he wish to rise from his torment in Purgatory, at the same time that through inclination to satisfy the divine justice he yet remains there."

Propension now as eager to fulfil  
 The allotted torment, as erewhile to sin.  
 And I, who in this punishment had lain  
 Five hundred years and more, but now have felt  
 Free wish for happier clime. Therefore thou felt'st  
 The mountain tremble; and the spirits devout  
 Heard'st, over all his limits, utter praise  
 To that liege Lord, whom I entreat their joy  
 To hasten." Thus he spake: and, since the draught  
 Is grateful ever as the thirst is keen,  
 No words may speak my fulness of content.

"Now," said the instructor sage, "I see the net <sup>1</sup>  
 That takes ye here; and how the toils are loosed;  
 Why rocks the mountain, and why ye rejoice.  
 Vouchsafe, that from thy lips I next may learn  
 Who on the earth thou wast; and wherefore here,  
 So many an age, wert prostrate."—"In that time,  
 When the good Titus,<sup>2</sup> with heaven's King to help,  
 Avenged those piteous gashes, whence the blood  
 By Judas sold did issue; with the name <sup>3</sup>  
 Most lasting and most honour'd, there, was I  
 Abundantly renown'd," the shade replied,  
 "Not yet with faith endued. So passing sweet  
 My vocal spirit; from Tolosa,<sup>4</sup> Rome  
 To herself drew me, where I merited  
 A myrtle garland <sup>5</sup> to inwreathe my brow.  
 Statius they name me still. Of Thebes I sang,  
 And next of great Achilles; but i' the way  
 Fell <sup>6</sup> with the second burthen. Of my flame  
 Those sparkles were the seeds, which I derived  
 From the bright fountain of celestial fire

<sup>1</sup> *I see the net.*] "I perceive that ye are detained here by your wish to satisfy the divine justice." <sup>2</sup> *When the good Titus.*] When it was so ordered by the divine Providence that Titus, by the destruction of Jerusalem, should avenge the death of our Saviour on the Jews.

<sup>3</sup> *The name.*] The name of Poet. <sup>4</sup> *From Tolosa.*] Dante, as many others have done, confounds Statius the poet, who was a Neapolitan, with a rhetorician of the same name, who was of Tolosa, or Toulouse.

<sup>5</sup> *A myrtle garland.*]

Et vos, O lauri, carpam, et te, proxima myrte.

Virg., Ecl. ii.

<sup>6</sup> *Fell.*] Statius lived to write only a small part of the Achilleid.



That feeds unnumber'd lamps ; the song I mean  
Which sounds Æneas' wanderings : that the breast  
I hung at ; that the nurse, from whom my veins  
Drank inspiration : whose authority  
Was ever sacred with me. To have lived  
Coeval with the Mantuan, I would bide  
The revolution of another sun  
Beyond my stated years in banishment."

The Mantuan, when he heard him, turn'd to me ;  
And holding silence, by his countenance  
Enjoin'd me silence : but the power, which wills,  
Bears not supreme control ; laughter and tears  
Follow so closely on the passion prompts them,  
They wait not for the motions of the will  
In natures most sincere. I did but smile,<sup>1</sup>  
As one who winks ; and thereupon the shade  
Broke off, and peer'd into mine eyes, where best  
Our looks interpret. " So to good event  
Mayst thou conduct such great emprise," he cried,  
" Say, why across thy visage beam'd, but now,  
The lightning of a smile." On either part  
Now am I straiten'd ; one conjures me speak,  
The other to silence binds me : whence a sigh  
I utter, and the sigh is heard. " Speak on,"  
The teacher cried : " and do not fear to speak ;  
But tell him what so earnestly he asks."  
Whereon I thus : " Perchance, O ancient spirit !  
Thou marvel'st at my smiling. There is room  
For yet more wonder. He, who guides my ken  
On high, he is that Mantuan, led by whom  
Thou didst presume of men and gods to sing.  
If other cause thou deem'dst for which I smiled,  
Leave it as not the true one : and believe  
Those words, thou spakest of him, indeed the cause."  
Now down he bent to embrace my teacher's feet ;  
But he forbade him : " Brother ! do it not :  
Thou art a shadow, and behold'st a shade."  
He, rising, answer'd thus : " Now hast thou proved

<sup>1</sup> *I did but smile.*] " I smiled no more than one would do who wished by a smile to intimate his consciousness of anything to another person."

The force and ardour of the love I bear thee,  
When I forget we are but things of air,  
And, as a substance, treat an empty shade."

## CANTO XXII

## ARGUMENT

Dante, Virgil, and Statius mount to the sixth cornice, where the sin of gluttony is cleansed, the two Latin Poets discoursing by the way. Turning to the right, they find a tree hung with sweet-smelling fruit, and watered by a shower that issues from the rock. Voices are heard to proceed from among the leaves, recording examples of temperance.

Now we had left the angel, who had turn'd  
To the sixth circle our ascending step ;  
One gash from off my forehead razed ; while they,  
Whose wishes tend to justice, shouted forth,  
" Blessed ! " <sup>1</sup> and ended with " I thirst " : and I,  
More nimble than along the other straits,  
So journey'd, that, without the sense of toil,  
I follow'd upward the swift-footed shades ;  
When Virgil thus began : " Let its pure flame  
From virtue flow, and love can never fail  
To warm another's bosom, so the light  
Shine manifestly forth. Hence, from that hour,  
When, 'mongst us in the purlieus of the deep,  
Came down the spirit of Aquinum's bard,<sup>2</sup>  
Who told of thine affection, my good will  
Hath been for thee of quality as strong  
As ever link'd itself to one not seen.  
Therefore these stairs will now seem short to me.  
But tell me : and, if too secure, I loose  
The rein with a friend's licence, as a friend  
Forgive me, and speak now as with a friend :

<sup>1</sup> *Blessed.*] "Blessed be they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matt. v. 6. <sup>2</sup> *Aquinum's bard.*] Juvenal had celebrated his contemporary, Statius, Sat. vii. 82 ; though some critics imagine that there is a secret derision couched under his praise.

How chanced it covetous desire could find  
Place in that bosom, 'midst such ample store  
Of wisdom, as thy zeal had treasured there ? ”

First somewhat moved to laughter by his words,  
Stattius replied : “ Each syllable of thine  
Is a dear pledge of love. Things oft appear,  
That minister false matter to our doubts,  
When their true causes are removed from sight.  
Thy question doth assure me, thou believest  
I was on earth a covetous man ; perhaps  
Because thou found'st me in that circle placed.  
Know then I was too wide of avarice :  
And e'en for that excess, thousands of moons  
Have wax'd and waned upon my sufferings.  
And were it not that I with heedful care  
Noted, where thou exclaim'st as if in ire  
With human nature, ‘ Why,<sup>1</sup> thou cursed thirst  
‘ Of gold ! dost not with juster measure guide  
‘ The appetite of mortals ? ’ I had met  
The fierce encounter <sup>2</sup> of the voluble rock.  
Then was I ware that, with too ample wing,  
The hands may haste to lavishment ; and turn'd,  
As from my other evil, so from this,  
In penitence. How many from their grave  
Shall with shorn locks <sup>3</sup> arise, who living, ay,  
And at life's last extreme, of this offence,  
Through ignorance, did not repent ! And know,  
The fault, which lies direct from any sin  
In level opposition, here, with that,  
Wastes its green rankness on one common heap.  
Therefore, if I have been with those, who wail  
Their avarice, to cleanse me ; through reverse  
Of their transgression, such hath been my lot.”

To whom the sovran of the pastoral song :

<sup>1</sup> *Why.*] Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,

Auri sacra fames ?

Virg., *Æn.* lib. iii. 57.

Venturi supposes, that Dante might have mistaken the meaning of the word *sacra*, and construed it “ holy,” instead of “ cursed.” But I see no necessity for having recourse to so improbable a conjecture.

<sup>2</sup> *The fierce encounter.*] See *Inf.*, Canto vii. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *With shorn locks.*]

See *Inf.*, Canto vii. 58.

" While thou didst sing that cruel warfare waged  
By the twin sorrow of Jocasta's womb,<sup>1</sup>  
From thy discourse with Clio <sup>2</sup> there, it seems  
As faith had not been thine ; without the which,  
Good deeds suffice not. And if so, what sun  
Rose on thee, or what candle pierced the dark,  
That thou didst after see to hoise the sail,  
And follow where the fisherman had led ? "

He answering thus : " By thee conducted first,  
I enter'd the Parnassian grots, and quaff'd  
Of the clear spring : illumined first by thee,  
Open'd mine eyes to God. Thou didst, as one,  
Who, journeying through the darkness, bears a  
light

Behind, that profits not himself, but makes  
His followers wise, when thou exclaimed'st, ' Lo !  
' A renovated world,<sup>3</sup> Justice return'd,  
' Times of primeval innocence restored,  
' And a new race descended from above.'  
Poet and Christian both to thee I owed.  
That thou mayst mark more clearly what I trace,  
My hand shall stretch forth to inform the lines  
With livelier colouring. Soon o'er all the world,  
By messengers from heaven, the true belief  
Teem'd now prolific ; and that word of thine,  
Accordant, to the new instructors chimed.  
Induced by which agreement, I was wont  
Resort to them ; and soon their sanctity  
So won upon me, that, Domitian's rage  
Pursuing them, I mix'd my tears with theirs ;  
And, while on earth I stay'd, still succour'd them ;

<sup>1</sup> *The twin sorrow of Jocasta's womb.*] Eteocles and Polynices.

<sup>2</sup> *With Clio.*]

Quem prius heroum Clio dabis ? immodicum iræ  
Tydea ? laurigeri subitos an vatis hiatus ?

Stat., *Thebaid.* i. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *A renovated world.*]

Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.  
Jam redit et Virgo ; redeunt Saturnia regna ;  
Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.

Virg., *Ecl.* iv. 5.

For the application of Virgil's prophecy to the incarnation, see Natalis  
Alexander, *Hist. Eccl. Sæc. i. Dissert.* i. Paris, 1679, v. i. p. 166.

And their most righteous customs made me scorn  
 All sects besides. Before <sup>1</sup> I led the Greeks,  
 In tuneful fiction, to the streams of Thebes,  
 I was baptized: but secretly, through fear,  
 Remain'd a Christian, and conform'd long time  
 To Pagan rites. Four centuries and more,  
 I, for that lukewarmness, was fain to pace  
 Round the fourth circle. Thou then, who hast raised  
 The covering which did hide such blessing from me,  
 Whilst much of this ascent is yet to climb,  
 Say, if thou know, where our old Terence <sup>2</sup> bides,  
 Cæcilius,<sup>3</sup> Plautus, Varro: <sup>4</sup> if condemn'd  
 They dwell, and in what province of the deep."  
 "These," said my guide, with Persius and myself,  
 And others many more, are with that Greek,<sup>5</sup>  
 Of mortals, the most cherish'd by the nine,  
 In the first ward <sup>6</sup> of darkness. There, oft-times,  
 We of that mount hold converse, on whose top  
 For aye our nurses live. We have the bard  
 Of Pella <sup>7</sup> and the Teian,<sup>8</sup> Agatho,<sup>9</sup>  
 Simonides, and many a Grecian else

<sup>1</sup> Before.] Before I had composed the Thebaid. <sup>2</sup> Our old Terence.] "Antico," which is found in many of the old editions, seems preferable to "amico." <sup>3</sup> Cæcilius.] Cæcilius Statius, a Latin comic poet, of whose works some fragments only remain. Our Poet had Horace in his eye.

Dicitur Afrani toga convenisse Menandro,  
 Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi,  
 Vincere Cæcilius gravitate, Terentius arte.

Epist., lib. ii. 1,

<sup>4</sup> Varro.] "Quam multa pene omnia tradidit Varro." Quintilian, Instit. Orat. lib. xii. "Vix aperto ad philosophiam aditu, primus M. Varro veterum omnium doctissimus." Sadolet., de liberis recte instit. Edit. Lugd. 1533, p. 137. <sup>5</sup> That Greek.] Homer. <sup>6</sup> In the first ward.] In Limbo.

<sup>7</sup> ——— The bard

Of Pella.] Euripides.

<sup>8</sup> The Teian.] Euripide v' è nosco e Anacreonte.

The Monte Cassino MS. reads "Antifonte" "Antipho," instead of "Anacreonte." Dante probably knew little more of these Greek writers than the names. <sup>9</sup> Agatho.] Agatho is mentioned by Xenophon in his Symposium, by Plato in the Protagoras, and in the Banquet, a favourite book with our author, and by Aristotle in his Art of Poetry, where the following passage occurs respecting him: ἐν ἐνίαϊς μὲν ἐν ᾗ δύο τῶν γνωρίμων ἐστὶν ὀνομάτων, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πεποιημένα· ἐν ἐνίαϊς δὲ οὐθέν· ὅσον ἐν τῷ Ἀγάθωνος Ἀνθῆ. ὁμοίως γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ τὰ τε πράγματα καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα πεποίηται, καὶ οὐδὲν ἥττον εἴφραϊναι. Edit. 1794, p. 33. "There

Ingarlanded with laurel. Of thy train,<sup>1</sup>  
 Antigone is there, Deïphile,  
 Argia, and as sorrowful as erst  
 Ismene, and who show'd Langia's wave : <sup>2</sup>  
 Deïdamia with her sisters there,  
 And blind Tiresias' daughter,<sup>3</sup> and the bride  
 Sea-born of Peleus." <sup>4</sup> Either poet now  
 Was silent ; and no longer by the ascent  
 Or the steep walls obstructed, round them cast  
 Inquiring eyes. Four handmaids <sup>5</sup> of the day  
 Had finish'd now their office, and the fifth  
 Was at the chariot-beam, directing still  
 Its flamy point aloof ; when thus my guide :  
 " Methinks, it well behoves us to the brink  
 Bend the right shoulder, circuiting the mount,  
 As we have ever used." So custom there  
 Was usher to the road ; the which we chose  
 Less doubtful, as that worthy shade <sup>6</sup> complied.  
 They on before me went : I sole pursued,  
 Listening their speech, that to my thoughts convey'd  
 Mysterious lessons of sweet poesy.  
 But soon they ceased ; for midway of the road

are, however, some tragedies, in which one or two of the names are historical, and the rest feigned ; there are even some, in which none of the names are historical ; such is Agatho's tragedy called *The Flower* ; for in that all is invention, both incidents and names ; and yet it pleases." Aristotle's *Treatise on Poetry*, by Thomas Twining. 8vo. edit. 1812, vol. i. p. 128.

<sup>1</sup> *Of thy train.*] "Of those celebrated in thy Poem." <sup>2</sup> *Who show'd Langia's wave.*] Hypsipile. See note to Canto xxvi. v. 87.  
<sup>3</sup> *Tiresias' daughter.*] Dante, as some have thought, had forgotten that he had placed Manto, the daughter of Tiresias, among the sorcerers. See Inf., Canto xx. Vellutello endeavours, rather awkwardly, to reconcile the apparent inconsistency, by observing, that although she was placed there as a sinner, yet, as one of famous memory, she had also a place among the worthies in Limbo. Lombardi, or rather the Della Crusca academicians, excuse our author better, by observing that Tiresias had a daughter named Daphne. See Diodorus Siculus, lib. iv. § 66. I have here to acknowledge a communication made to me by the learned writer of an anonymous letter, who observes that Manto and Daphne are only different names for the same person ; and that Servius, in his Commentary on the *Æneid*, x. 198, says, that some make Manto the prophetess to be a daughter of Hercules.

<sup>4</sup> ——— *The bride*

*Sea-born of Peleus.*] Thetis. <sup>5</sup> *Four handmaids.*] Compare Canto xii. v. 74. <sup>6</sup> *That worthy shade.*] Statius.



A tree we found, with goodly fruitage hung,  
 And pleasant to the smell : and as a fir,  
 Upward from bough to bough, less ample spreads ;  
 So downward this less ample spread ;<sup>1</sup> that none,  
 Methinks, aloft may climb. Upon the side,  
 That closed our path, a liquid crystal fell  
 From the steep rock, and through the sprays above  
 Stream'd showering. With associate step the bards  
 Drew near the plant ; and, from amidst the leaves,  
 A voice was heard : " Ye shall be chary of me " ;  
 And after added : " Mary took more thought <sup>2</sup>  
 For joy and honour of the nuptial feast,  
 Than for herself, who answers now for you.  
 The women of old Rome <sup>3</sup> were satisfied  
 With water for their beverage. Daniel <sup>4</sup> fed  
 On pulse, and wisdom gain'd. The primal age  
 Was beautiful as gold : and hunger then  
 Made acorns tasteful ; thirst, each rivulet  
 Run nectar. Honey and locusts were the food,  
 Whereon the Baptist in the wilderness  
 Fed, and that eminence of glory reach'd  
 And greatness, which the Evangelist records."

<sup>1</sup> *Downward this less ample spread.*] The early commentators understand that this tree had its root upward and the boughs downward ; and this opinion, however derided by their successors, is not a little countenanced by the intimation of Frezzi, who lived so near the time of our Poet :

Su dentro al cielo avea la sua radice,  
 E giù inverso terra i rami spande.

Il Quadrir. lib. iv. cap. i.

———— It had in heaven  
 Its root above, and downward to the earth  
 Stretch'd forth the branches.

<sup>2</sup> *Mary took more thought.*] " The blessed Virgin, who answers for you now in heaven, when she said to Jesus, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, ' they have no wine,' regarded not the gratification of her own taste, but the honour of the nuptial banquet." <sup>3</sup> *The women of old Rome.*] See Valerius Maximus, l. ii. c. i. <sup>4</sup> *Daniel.*] " Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days ; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink." Dan. i. 11, 12. " Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink : and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom : and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." *Ibid.* 16, 17.

## CANTO XXIII

## ARGUMENT

They are overtaken by the spirit of Forese, who had been a friend of our Poet's on earth, and who now inveighs against the immodest dress of their countrywomen at Florence.

ON the green leaf mine eyes were fix'd, like his  
Who throws away his days in idle chase  
Of the diminutive birds, when thus I heard  
The more than father warn me: "Son! our time  
Asks thriftier using. Linger not: away."

Thereat my face and steps at once I turn'd  
Toward the sages, by whose converse cheer'd  
I journey'd on, and felt no toil: and lo!  
A sound of weeping, and a song: "My lips,<sup>1</sup>  
O Lord!" and these so mingled, it gave birth  
To pleasure and to pain. "O Sire beloved!  
Say what is this I hear." Thus I inquired.

"Spirits," said he, "who, as they go, perchance,  
Their debt of duty pay." As on their road  
The thoughtful pilgrims, overtaking some  
Not known unto them, turn to them, and look,  
But stay not; thus, approaching from behind  
With speedier motion, eyed us, as they pass'd,  
A crowd of spirits, silent and devout.  
The eyes<sup>2</sup> of each were dark and hollow; pale  
Their visage, and so lean withal, the bones  
Stood staring through the skin. I do not think  
Thus dry and meagre Erisichon show'd,  
When pinch'd by sharp-set famine to the quick.

"Lo!" to myself I mused, "the race, who lost  
Jerusalem, when Mary<sup>3</sup> with dire beak

<sup>1</sup> *My lips.*] "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise." Ps. li. 15. <sup>2</sup> *The eyes.*] Compare Ovid, *Metam.* lib. viii. 801.

*Hirtus erat crinis; cava lumina, pallor in ore:*

*Dura cutis, per quam spectari viscera possent:  
Ossa sub incurvis exstabant arida lumbis.*

<sup>3</sup> *When Mary.*] Josephus, *de Bello Jud.* lib. vii. c. xxi. p. 954. Ed. Genev. fol. 161r.

Prey'd on her child." The sockets seem'd as rings,  
From which the gems were dropt. Who reads the  
name <sup>1</sup>

Of man upon his forehead, there the M  
Had traced most plainly. Who would deem, that  
scent

Of water and an apple could have proved  
Powerful to generate such pining want,  
Not knowing how it wrought? While now I stood,  
Wondering what thus could waste them (for the cause  
Of their gaunt hollowness and scaly rind  
Appear'd not), lo! a spirit turn'd his eyes  
In their deep-sunken cells, and fasten'd them  
On me, then cried with vehemence aloud:

"What grace is this vouchsafed me?" By his looks  
I ne'er had recognised him: but the voice  
Brought to my knowledge what his cheer conceal'd.  
Remembrance of his altered lineaments  
Was kindled from that spark; and I agnized  
The visage of Forese.<sup>2</sup> "Ah! respect  
This wan and leprous-wither'd skin," thus he  
Suppliant implored, "this macerated flesh.  
Speak to me truly of thyself. And who  
Are those twain spirits, that escort thee there?  
Be it not said thou scorn'st to talk with me."

"That face of thine," I answer'd him, "which dead  
I once bewail'd, disposes me not less  
For weeping, when I see it thus transform'd.  
Say then, by Heaven, what blasts ye thus? The  
whilst

I wonder, ask not speech from me: unapt

<sup>1</sup> *Who reads the name.*] "He who pretends to distinguish the letters which form OMO in the features of the human face, might easily have traced out the M on their emaciated countenances." The temples, nose, and forehead are supposed to represent this letter; and the eyes the two O's placed within each side of it.

<sup>2</sup> *Forese.*] One of the brothers of Piccarda; he who is again spoken of in the next Canto, and introduced in the *Paradiso*, Canto iii. Cionacci, in his *Storia della Beata Umiliana*, Parte iv. cap. i., is referred to by Lombardi, in order to show that Forese was also the brother of Corso Donati, our author's political enemy. See next Canto, v. 81. Tiraboschi, after Crescimbeni, enumerates him among the Tuscan poets. *Stor. della Poes. It.* v. i. p. 139.

Is he to speak, whom other will employs."

He thus : " The water and the plant, we pass'd,  
With power are gifted, by the eternal will  
Infused ; the which so pines me. Every spirit,  
Whose song bewails his gluttony indulged  
Too grossly, here in hunger and in thirst  
Is purified. The odour, which the fruit,  
And spray that showers upon the verdure, breathe,  
Inflames us with desire to feed and drink.  
Nor once alone, encompassing our route,  
We come to add fresh fuel to the pain :  
Pain, said I ? solace rather : for that will,  
To the tree, leads us, by which Christ was led  
To call on Eli, joyful, when He paid  
Our ransom from His vein." I answering thus :  
" Forese ! from that day in which the world  
For better life thou changedst, not five years  
Have circled. If the power <sup>1</sup> of sinning more  
Were first concluded in thee, ere thou knew'st  
That kindly grief which re-espouses us  
To God, how hither art thou come so soon ?  
I thought to find thee lower,<sup>2</sup> there, where time  
Is recompense for time." He straight replied :  
" To drink up the sweet wormwood of affliction  
I have been brought thus early, by the tears  
Stream'd down my Nella's <sup>3</sup> cheeks. Her prayers  
devout,  
Her sighs have drawn me from the coast, where oft  
Expectance lingers ; and have set me free  
From the other circles. In the sight of God  
So much the dearer is my widow prized,  
She whom I loved so fondly, as she ranks  
More singly eminent for virtuous deeds.  
The tract, most barbarous of Sardinia's isle,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *If the power.*] " If thou didst delay thy repentance to the last, when thou hadst lost the power of sinning, how happens it thou are arrived here so early ? " <sup>2</sup> *Lower.*] In the Ante-Purgatory. See Canto ii. <sup>3</sup> *My Nella.*] The wife of Forese. <sup>4</sup> *The tract, most barbarous of Sardinia's isle.*] The *Barbagia* is a part of Sardinia, to which that name was given, on account of the uncivilized state of its inhabitants, who are said to have gone nearly naked.

Hath dames more chaste, and modester by far,  
 Than that wherein I left her. O sweet brother !  
 What wouldst thou have me say ? <sup>1</sup> A time to come  
 Stands full within my view, to which this hour  
 Shall not be counted of an ancient date,  
 When from the pulpit shall be loudly warn'd  
 The unblushing dames of Florence,<sup>2</sup> lest they bare  
 Unkerchief'd bosoms to the common gaze.  
 What savage women hath the world e'er seen,  
 What Saracens,<sup>3</sup> for whom there needed scourge  
 Of spiritual or other discipline,  
 To force them walk with covering on their limbs ?  
 But did they see, the shameless ones, what Heaven  
 Wafts on swift wing toward them while I speak,  
 Their mouths were oped for howling : they shall taste  
 Of sorrow (unless foresight cheat me here)  
 Or e'er the cheek of him be clothed with down,  
 Who is now rock'd with lullaby <sup>4</sup> asleep.  
 Ah ! now, my brother, hide thyself no more :  
 Thou seest <sup>5</sup> how not I alone, but all,  
 Gaze, where thou veil'st the intercepted sun."  
 Whence I replied : " If thou recall to mind  
 What we were once together, even yet

<sup>1</sup> *What wouldst thou have me say ?*] The interrogative, which Lombardi dismiss from this place, as unmeaning and superfluous, appears to me to be the natural result of a deep feeling, and to prepare us for the invective that follows. <sup>2</sup> *The unblushing dames of Florence.*] Landino's note exhibits a curious instance of the changeableness of his countrywomen. He even goes beyond the acrimony of the original. "In those days," says the commentator, "no less than in ours, the Florentine ladies exposed the neck and bosom, a dress, no doubt, more suitable to a harlot than a matron. But, as they changed soon after, insomuch that they wore collars up to the chin, covering the whole of the neck and throat, so have I hopes they will change again ; not indeed so much from motives of decency, as through that fickleness, which pervades every action of their lives. <sup>3</sup> *Saracens.*] "This word, during the Middle Ages, was indiscriminately applied to Pagans and Mahometans ; in short, to all nations (except the Jews) who did not profess Christianity." Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*," vol. i. p. 196 (a note). Lond. 8vo, 1805.

<sup>4</sup> *With lullaby.*] Colui che mo si consola con nanna.  
 "Nanna" is said to have been the sound with which the Florentine women hushed their children to sleep. <sup>5</sup> *Thou seest.*] Thou seest how we wonder that thou are here in a living body.

Remembrance of those days may grieve thee sore.  
 That I forsook that life, was due to him  
 Who there precedes me, some few evenings past,  
 When she was round, who shines with sister lamp  
 To his that glisters yonder," and I show'd  
 The sun. "'Tis he, who through profoundest night  
 Of the true dead has brought me, with this flesh  
 As true, that follows. From that gloom the aid  
 Of his sure comfort drew me on to climb,  
 And, climbing, wind along this mountain-steep,  
 Which rectifies in you whate'er the world  
 Made crooked and depraved. I have his word,  
 That he will bear me company as far  
 As till I come where Beatrice dwells :  
 But there must leave me. Virgil is that spirit,  
 Who thus hath promised," and I pointed to him :  
 " The other is that shade, for whom so late  
 Your realm, as he arose, exulting, shook  
 'Through every pendent cliff and rocky bound."

## CANTO XXIV.

### ARGUMENT

Forese points out several others by name who are here, like himself, purifying themselves from the vice of gluttony ; and amongst the rest, Buonaggiunta of Lucca, with whom our Poet converses. Forese then predicts the violent end of Dante's political enemy, Corso Donati ; and, when he has quitted them, the Poet, in company with Statius and Virgil, arrives at another tree, from whence issue voices that record ancient examples of gluttony ; and proceeding forwards, they are directed by an angel which way to ascend to the next cornice of the mountain.

OUR journey was not slacken'd by our talk,  
 Nor yet our talk by journeying. Still we spake,  
 And urged our travel stoutly, like a ship  
 When the wind sits astern. The shadowy forms,  
 That seem'd things dead and dead again, drew in  
 At their deep-delved orbs rare wonder of me,  
 Perceiving I had life ; and I my words



Continued, and thus spake : “ He journeys <sup>1</sup> up  
 Perhaps more tardily than else he would,  
 For others’ sake. But tell me, if thou know’st,  
 Where is Piccarda ? <sup>2</sup> Tell me, if I see  
 Any of mark, among this multitude  
 Who eye me thus.”—“ My sister (she for whom,  
 ’Twixt beautiful and good, I cannot say  
 Which name was fitter) wears e’en now her crown,  
 And triumphs in Olympus.” Saying this,  
 He added : “ Since spare diet hath so worn  
 Our semblance out, ’tis lawful here to name  
 Each one. This,” and his finger then he raised,  
 “ Is Buonaggiunta,<sup>3</sup>—Buonaggiunta, he  
 Of Lucca : and that face beyond him, pierced  
 Unto a leaner fineness than the rest,  
 Had keeping of the church ; he was of Tours,<sup>4</sup>  
 And purges by wan abstinence away  
 Bolsena’s eels and cups of muscadel.”<sup>5</sup>

He show’d me many others, one by one :  
 And all, as they were named, seem’d well content ;  
 For no dark gesture I discern’d in any.  
 I saw, through hunger, Ubaldino <sup>6</sup> grind

<sup>1</sup> *He journeys.*] The soul of Statius perhaps proceeds more slowly, in order that he may enjoy as long as possible the company of Virgil.

<sup>2</sup> *Piccarda.*] See Paradiso, Canto iii. <sup>3</sup> *Buonaggiunta.*] Buonag-

giunta Urbicani, of Lucca. “ There is a canzone by this poet, printed in the collection made by the Giunti (p. 209), and a sonnet to Guido Guinicelli in that made by Corbinelli (p. 169), from which we collect that he lived not about 1230, as Quadrio supposes (t. ii. p. 159), but towards the end of the thirteenth century. Concerning other poems by Buonaggiunta, that are preserved in MS. in some libraries, Crescimbeni may be consulted.” Tiraboschi, Mathias’s ed. v. i. p. 115.

<sup>4</sup> *He was of Tours.*] Simon of Tours became Pope with the title of Martin iv. in 1281, and died in 1285. <sup>5</sup> *Bolsena’s eels and cups of muscadel.*] The Nidobeatina edition and the Monte Cassino MS. agree

in reading

L’anguille di Bolsena in la vernaccia ;  
 from which it would seem, that Martin the Fourth refined so much on epicurism as to have his eels killed by being put into the wine called vernaccia, in order to heighten their flavour. The Latin annotator on the MS. relates, that the following epitaph was inscribed on the sepulchre of the Pope :

Gaudent anguillæ, quod mortuus hic jacet ille,  
 Qui quasi morte reas excoriabat eas.

<sup>6</sup> *Ubaldino.*] Ubaldino degli Ubaldini, of Pila, in the Florentine territory.

His teeth on emptiness ; and Boniface,<sup>1</sup>  
 That waved the crozier <sup>2</sup> o'er a numerous flock :  
 I saw the Marquis,<sup>3</sup> who had time erewhile  
 To swill at Forlì with less drought ; yet so,  
 Was one ne'er sated. I howe'er, like him  
 That, gazing 'midst a crowd, singles out one,  
 So singled him of Lucca ; for methought  
 Was none amongst them took such note of me.  
 Somewhat I heard him whisper of Gentucca : <sup>4</sup>  
 The sound was indistinct, and murmur'd there,<sup>5</sup>  
 Where justice, that so strips them, fix'd her sting.

"Spirit !" said I, "it seems as thou wouldst fain  
 Speak with me. Let me hear thee. Mutual wish  
 To converse prompts, which let us both indulge."

He, answering, straight began : "Woman is born,  
 Whose brow no wimple shades yet,<sup>6</sup> that shall make  
 My city please thee, blame it as they may.<sup>7</sup>  
 Go then with this forewarning. If aught false  
 My whisper too implied, the event shall tell.  
 But say, if of a truth I see the man  
 Of that new lay the inventor, which begins  
 With 'Ladies, ye that con the lore of love.' " <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Boniface.*] Archbishop of Ravenna. By Venturi he is called Bonifazio de' Fieschi, a Genoese ; by Vellutello, the son of the above-mentioned Ubaldini ; and by Landino, Francioso, a Frenchman.

<sup>2</sup> *Crozier.*] It is uncertain whether the word "rocco," in the original, means a "crozier" or a "bishop's rochet," that is, his episcopal gown. In support of the latter interpretation Lombardi cites Du Fresne's *Glossary*, article Roccus. "Rochettum hodie vocant vestem linteam episcoporum . . . quasi parvum roccum" ; and explains the verse,

Che pasturò col rocco molte genti :

"who, from the revenues of his bishoprick, supported in luxury a large train of dependents." If the reader wishes to learn more on the subject, he is referred to Monti's *Proposta*, under the word "Rocco."

<sup>3</sup> *The Marquis.*] The Marchese de' Rigogliosi, of Forlì. When his butler told him it was commonly reported in the city that he did nothing but drink, he is said to have answered : "And do you tell them that I am always thirsty." <sup>4</sup> *Gentucca.*] Of this lady it is thought that our Poet became enamoured during his exile. <sup>5</sup> *There.*] In the throat, the part in which they felt the torment inflicted by the divine justice. <sup>6</sup> *Whose brow no wimple shades yet.*] "Who has not yet assumed the dress of a woman." <sup>7</sup> *Blame it as they may.*] See *Inf.*, Canto xxi. 39.

<sup>8</sup> *Ladies, ye that con the lore of love.*]

Donne ch' avete intelletto d'amore.  
 The first verse of a canzone in our author's *Vita Nuova*.

To whom I thus : " Count of me but as one,  
Who am the scribe of love ; that, when he breathes,  
Take up my pen, and, as he dictates, write."

" Brother ! " said he, " the hindrance, which once  
held

The notary,<sup>1</sup> with Guittone<sup>2</sup> and myself,  
Short of that new and sweeter<sup>3</sup> style I hear,  
Is now disclosed : I see how ye your plumes  
Stretch, as the inditer guides them ; which, no  
question,

Ours did not. He that seeks a grace beyond,  
Sees not the distance parts one style from other." And,  
as contented, here he held his peace.

Like as the birds,<sup>4</sup> that winter near the Nile,  
In squared regiment, direct their course,  
Then stretch themselves in file for speedier flight ;  
Thus all the tribe of spirits, as they turn'd  
Their visage, faster fled, nimble alike  
Through leanness and desire. And as a man,  
Tired with the motion of a trotting steed,  
Slacks pace, and stays behind his company,

<sup>1</sup> *The notary.*] Jacopo da Lentino, called the Notary, a poet of these times. He was probably an Apulian : for Dante (*De Vulg. Eloq.* lib. i. cap. 12), quoting a verse which belongs to a canzone of his, published by the Giunti, without mentioning the writer's name, terms him one of "the illustrious Apulians," *præfulgentes Apuli*. See Tiraboschi, Mathias's edit. vol. i. p. 137. <sup>2</sup> *Guittone.*] Fra Guittone, of Arezzo, holds a distinguished place in Italian literature, as, besides his poems printed in the Collection of the Giunti, he has left a collection of letters, forty in number, which afford the earliest specimen of that kind of writing in the language. They were published at Rome in 1743, with learned illustrations by Giovanni Bottari. He was also the first who gave to the sonnet its regular and legitimate form, a species of composition in which not only his own countrymen, but many of the best poets in all the cultivated languages of modern Europe, have since so much delighted. Guittone, a native of Arezzo, was the son of Viva di Michele. He was of the order of the "Frati Godenti," of which an account may be seen in the notes to *Inf.*, Canto xxiii. In the year 1293 he founded a monastery of the order of Camaldoli, in Florence, and died in the following year. Tiraboschi, *ibid.* p. 119. Dante, in the Treatise *de Vulg. Eloq.* lib. i. cap. 13 (see note to v. 20, above), and lib. ii. cap. 6, blames him for preferring the plebeian to the more courtly style. The eighth book in the collection of the old poets published by the Giunti in 1527 consists of sonnets and canzoni by Guittone. They are marked by a peculiar solemnity of manner. <sup>3</sup> *That new and sweeter style.*] He means the style introduced in our Poet's time. <sup>4</sup> *The birds.*] Editor's note : The cranes.

Till his o'erbreathed lungs keep temperate time ;  
 E'en so Forese let that holy crew  
 Proceed, behind them lingering at my side,  
 And saying, " When shall I again behold thee ? "

" How long my life may last," said I, " I know not.  
 This know, how soon soever I return,  
 My wishes will before me have arrived :  
 Sithence the place,<sup>1</sup> where I am set to live,  
 Is, day by day, more scoop'd of all its good ;  
 And dismal ruin seems to threaten it."

" Go now," he cried : " lo ! he,<sup>2</sup> whose guilt is most,  
 Passes before my vision, dragg'd at heels  
 Of an infuriate beast. Toward the vale,  
 Where guilt hath no redemption, on it speeds,  
 Each step increasing swiftness on the last ;  
 Until a blow it strikes, that leaveth him  
 A corse most vilely shatter'd. No long space  
 Those wheels have yet to roll " (therewith his eyes  
 Look'd up to heaven), ere thou shalt plainly see  
 That which my words may not more plainly tell.  
 I quit thee : time is precious here : I lose  
 Too much, thus measuring my pace with thine."

As from a troop of well rank'd chivalry,  
 One knight, more enterprising than the rest,  
 Pricks forth at gallop, eager to display  
 His prowess in the first encounter proved ;  
 So parted he from us, with lengthen'd strides ;  
 And left me on the way with those twain spirits,  
 Who were such mighty marshals of the world.

When he beyond us had so fled, mine eyes  
 No nearer reach'd him, than my thought his words ;

<sup>1</sup> *The place.*] Florence.    <sup>2</sup> *He.*] Corso Donati was suspected of aiming at the sovereignty of Florence. To escape the fury of his fellow-citizens, he fled away on horseback, but falling, was overtaken and slain, A.D. 1308. The contemporary annalist, after relating at length the circumstances of his fate, adds, "that he was one of the wisest and most valorous knights, the best speaker, the most expert statesman, the most renowned and enterprising man of his age in Italy, a comely knight and of graceful carriage, but very worldly, and in his time had formed many conspiracies in Florence, and entered into many scandalous practices for the sake of attaining state and lordship." G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. xcvi.

The branches of another fruit, thick hung,  
 And blooming fresh, appear'd. E'en as our steps  
 Turn'd thither ; not far-off, it rose to view.  
 Beneath it were a multitude, that raised  
 Their hands, and shouted forth I know not what  
 Unto the boughs ; like greedy and fond brats,  
 That beg, and answer none obtain from him,  
 Of whom they beg ; but more to draw them on,  
 He, at arm's length, the object of their wish  
 Above them holds aloft, and hides it not.

At length, as undeceived, they went their way :  
 And we approach the tree, whom vows and tears  
 Sue to in vain ; the mighty tree. " Pass on,  
 And come not near. Stands higher up the wood,  
 Whereof Eve tasted : and from it was ta'en  
 This plant." Such sounds from midst the thickets  
 came.

Whence I, with either bard, close to the side  
 That rose, pass'd forth beyond. " Remember," next  
 We heard, " those unblest creatures of the clouds,<sup>1</sup>  
 How they their twyfold bosoms, overgorged,  
 Opposed in fight to Theseus : call to mind  
 The Hebrews,<sup>2</sup> how, effeminate, they stoop'd  
 To ease their thirst ; whence Gideon's ranks were  
 thinn'd,  
 As he to Madian march'd adown the hills."

Thus near one border coasting, still we heard  
 The sins of gluttony, with woe erewhile  
 Reguerdon'd. Then along the lonely path,  
 Once more at large, full thousand paces on  
 We travel'd, each contemplative and mute.

" Why pensive journey so ye three alone ? "  
 Thus suddenly a voice exclaim'd : whereat  
 I shook, as doth a scared and paltry beast ;  
 Then raised my head, to look from whence it came.

Was ne'er, in furnace, glass, or metal, seen  
 So bright and glowing red, as was the shape  
 I now beheld. " If ye desire to mount,"

<sup>1</sup> *Creatures of the clouds.*] The Centaurs. Ovid, *Metam.* lib. xii. fab. 4.  
*The Hebrews.*] Judg. vii.

He cried ; " here must ye turn. This way he goes,  
Who goes in quest of peace." His countenance  
Had dazzled me ; and to my guides I faced  
Backward, like one who walks as sound directs.

As when, to harbinger the dawn, springs up  
On freshen'd wing the air of May, and breathes  
Of fragrance, all impregn'd with herb and flowers ;  
E'en such a wind I felt upon my front  
Blow gently, and the moving of a wing  
Perceived, that, moving, shed ambrosial smell ;  
And then a voice : " Blessed are they, whom grace  
Doth so illume, that appetite in them  
Exhaleth no inordinate desire,  
Still hungering as the rule of temperance wills."

1-31-1939

## CANTO XXV

### ARGUMENT

Virgil and Statius resolve some doubts that have arisen in the mind of Dante from what he had just seen. They all arrive on the seventh and last cornice, where the sin of incontinence is purged in fire ; and the spirits of those suffering therein are heard to record illustrious instances of chastity.

It was an hour, when he who climbs, had need  
To walk uncrippled : for the sun <sup>1</sup> had now  
To Taurus the meridian circle left,  
And to the Scorpion left the night. As one,  
That makes no pause, but presses on his road,  
Whate'er betide him, if some urgent need  
Impel ; so enter'd we upon our way,  
One before other ; for, but singly, none  
That steep and narrow scale admits to climb.

E'en as the young stork lifteth up his wing  
Through wish to fly, yet ventures not to quit

<sup>1</sup> *The sun.*] The sun had passed the meridian two hours, and that meridian was now occupied by the constellation of Taurus, to which as the Scorpion is opposite, the latter constellation was consequently at the meridian of night.



The nest, and drops it ; so in me desire  
 Of questioning my guide arose, and fell,  
 Arriving even to the act that marks  
 A man prepared for speech. Him all our haste  
 Restrain'd not ; but thus spake the sire beloved :  
 " Fear not to speed the shaft, that on thy lip  
 Stands trembling for its flight." Encouraged thus,  
 I straight began : " How there can leanness come,<sup>1</sup>  
 Where is no want of nourishment to feed ? "

" If thou," he answer'd, " hadst remember'd thee,  
 How Meleager<sup>2</sup> with the wasting brand  
 Wasted alike, by equal fires consumed ;  
 This would not trouble thee : and hadst thou thought,  
 How in the mirror<sup>3</sup> your reflected form  
 With mimic motion vibrates ; what now seems  
 Hard, had appear'd no harder than the pulp  
 Of summer-fruit mature. But that thy will  
 In certainty may find its full repose,  
 Lo Statius here ! on him I call, and pray  
 That he would now be healer of thy wound."

" If, in thy presence, I unfold to him  
 The secrets of Heaven's vengeance, let me plead  
 Thine own injunction to exculpate me."  
 So Statius answer'd, and forthwith began :  
 " Attend my words, O son, and in thy mind  
 Receive them ; so shall they be light to clear  
 The doubt thou offer'st. Blood, concocted well,  
 Which by the thirsty veins is ne'er imbibed,  
 And rests as food superfluous, to be ta'en  
 From the replenish'd table, in the heart  
 Derives effectual virtue, that informs

<sup>1</sup> *How there can leanness come.*] "How can spirits, that need not corporeal nourishment, be subject to leanness?" This question gives rise to the following explanation of Statius respecting the formation of the human body from the first, its junction with the soul, and the passage of the latter to another world. <sup>2</sup> *Meleager.*] Virgil reminds Dante that, as Meleager was wasted away by the decree of the fates, and not through want of blood ; so by the divine appointment, there may be leanness where there is no need of nourishment. <sup>3</sup> *In the mirror.*] As the reflexion of a form in a mirror is modified in agreement with the modification of the form itself ; so the soul, separated from the earthly body, impresses the image or ghost of that body with its own affections.

The several human limbs, as being that  
 Which passes through the veins itself to make them.  
 Yet more concocted it descends, where shame  
 Forbids to mention : and from thence distils  
 In natural vessels on another's blood.  
 There each unite together ; one disposed  
 To endure, to act the other, through that power  
 Derived from whence it came ; <sup>1</sup> and being met,  
 It 'gins to work, coagulating first ;  
 Then vivifies what its own substance made  
 Consist. With animation now indued,  
 The active virtue (differing from a plant  
 No further, than that this is on the way,  
 And at its limit that) continues yet  
 To operate, that now it moves, and feels,  
 As sea-sponge <sup>2</sup> clinging to the rock : and there  
 Assumes the organic powers its seed convey'd.  
 This is the moment, son ! at which the virtue,  
 That from the generating heart proceeds,  
 Is pliant and expansive ; for each limb  
 Is in the heart by forgeful nature plann'd.  
 How babe <sup>3</sup> of animal becomes, remains  
 For thy considering. At this point, more wise,  
 Than thou, has err'd, <sup>4</sup> making the soul disjoin'd  
 From passive intellect, because he saw  
 No organ for the latter's use assign'd.

“ Open thy bosom to the truth that comes.  
 Know, soon as in the embryo, to the brain  
 Articulation is complete, then turns  
 The primal Mover with a smile of joy  
 On such great work of nature ; and imbreathes  
 New spirit replete with virtue, that what here

<sup>1</sup> *From whence it came.*] “ From the heart,” as Lombardi rightly interprets it. <sup>2</sup> *As sea-sponge.*] The foetus in this stage a zoöphyte. <sup>3</sup> *Babe.*] By “fante,” which is here rendered “babe,” is meant “the human creature.” <sup>4</sup> *Than thou, has err'd.*] Averroes is said to be here meant. Venturi refers to his commentary on Aristotle, *De Anim.* lib. iii. cap. 5, for the opinion that there is only one universal intellect or mind pervading every individual of the human race. Much of the knowledge displayed by our Poet in the present Canto, appears to have been derived from the medical work of Averroes called the *Colliget*, lib. ii. f. 10. Ven. 1490, fol.

Active it finds, to its own substance draws ;  
And forms an individual soul, that lives,  
And feels, and bends reflective on itself.  
And that thou less mayst marvel at the word,  
Mark the sun's heat ; how that to wine doth change,  
Mix'd with the moisture filter'd through the vine.

“ When Lachesis hath spun the thread,<sup>1</sup> the soul  
Takes with her both the human and divine,  
Memory, intelligence, and will, in act  
Far keener than before ; the other powers  
Inactive all and mute. No pause allow'd,  
In wondrous sort self-moving, to one strand  
Of those, where the departed roam, she falls :  
Here learns her destined path. Soon as the place  
Receives her, round the plastic virtue beams,  
Distinct as in the living limbs before :  
And as the air, when saturate with showers,  
The casual beam refracting, decks itself  
With many a hue ; so here the ambient air  
Weareth that form, which influence of the soul  
Imprints on it : and like the flame, that where  
The fire moves, thither follows ; so, henceforth,  
The new form on the spirit follows still :  
Hence hath its semblance, and is shadow call'd,  
With each sense, even to the sight, endued :  
Hence speech is ours, hence laughter, tears, and sighs,  
Which thou mayst oft have witness'd on the mount.  
The obedient shadow fails not to present  
Whatever varying passion moves within us.  
And this the cause of what thou marvel'st at.”

Now the last flexure of our way we reach'd ;  
And to the right hand turning other care  
Awaits us. Here the rocky precipice  
Hurls forth redundant flames ; and from the rim  
A blast up-blown, with forcible rebuff  
Driveth them back, sequester'd from its bound.

Behoved us, one by one, along the side,  
That border'd on the void, to pass ; and I

<sup>1</sup> *When Lachesis hath spun the thread.*] When a man's life on earth is at an end.

Fear'd on one hand the fire, on the other fear'd  
Headlong to fall : when thus the instructor warn'd ;  
“ Strict rein must in this place direct the eyes.  
A little swerving and the way is lost.”

Then from the bosom of the burning mass,  
“ O God of mercy ! ” <sup>1</sup> heard I sung, and felt  
No less desire to turn. And when I saw  
Spirits along the flame proceeding, I  
Between their footsteps and mine own was fain  
To share by turns my view. At the hymn's close  
They shouted loud, “ I do not know a man ” ; <sup>2</sup>  
Then in low voice again took up the strain ;  
Which once more ended, “ To the wood,” they cried,  
“ Ran Dian, and drave forth Callisto <sup>3</sup> stung  
With Cytherea's poison ” : then return'd  
Unto their song ; then many a pair extoll'd,  
Who lived in virtue chastely and the bands  
Of wedded love. Nor from that task, I ween,  
Surcease they ; whilesoe'er the scorching fire  
Enclasps them. Of such skill appliance needs,  
To medicine the wound that healeth last.<sup>4</sup>

## CANTO XXVI

### ARGUMENT

The spirits wonder at seeing the shadow cast by the body of Dante on the flame as he passes it. This moves one of them to address him. It proves to be Guido Guinicelli, the Italian poet, who points out to him the spirit of Arnault Daniel, the Provençal, with whom he also speaks.

WHILE singly thus along the rim we walk'd,  
Oft the good master warn'd me : “ Look thou well.

<sup>1</sup> “ O God of mercy.”] “ Summæ Deus clementiæ.” The beginning of the hymn sung on the Sabbath at matins, as it stands in the ancient breviaries ; for in the modern it is “ summæ parens clementiæ.” Lombardi. <sup>2</sup> *I do not know a man.*] Luke i. 34. <sup>3</sup> *Callisto.*] See Ovid, *Metam.* lib. ii. fab. 5. <sup>4</sup> Editor's note: *The wound that healeth last.*] “ La piaga dassrezzo.” The last P remaining unhealed upon Dante's forehead, symbolical of the last of the seven deadly sins.

Avail it that I caution thee." The sun  
Now all the western clime irradiate changed  
From azure tinct to white ; and, as I pass'd,  
My passing shadow made the umber'd flame  
Burn ruddier. At so strange a sight I mark'd  
That many a spirit marvel'd on his way.

This bred occasion first to speak of me.  
"He seems," said they, "no insubstantial frame":  
Then, to obtain what certainty they might,  
Stretch'd towards me, careful not to overpass  
The burning pale. "O thou! who followest  
The others, haply not more slow than they,  
But moved by reverence; answer me, who burn  
In thirst and fire: nor I alone, but these  
All for thine answer do more thirst, than doth  
Indian or Æthiop for the cooling stream.  
Tell us, how is it that thou makest thyself  
A wall against the sun, as thou not yet  
Into the inextricable toils of death  
Hadst enter'd?" Thus spake one: and I had  
straight

Declared me, if attention had not turn'd  
To new appearance. Meeting these, there came,  
Midway the burning path, a crowd, on whom  
Earnestly gazing, from each part I view  
The shadows all press forward, severally  
Each snatch a hasty kiss, and then away.  
E'en so the emmets, 'mid their dusky troops,  
Peer closely one at other, to spy out  
Their mutual road perchance, and how they thrive.

That friendly greeting parted, ere dispatch  
Of the first onward step, from either tribe  
Loud clamour rises: those who newly come,  
Shout "Sodom and Gomorrah!" these, "The cow  
Pasiphae enter'd, that the beast she woo'd  
Might rush unto her luxury." Then as cranes,  
That part towards the Riphæan mountains fly,  
Part towards the Lybic sands, these to avoid  
The ice, and those the sun; so hasteth off  
One crowd, advances the other; and resume

Their first song, weeping, and their several shout.

Again drew near my side the very same,  
Who had erewhile besought me ; and their looks  
Mark'd eagerness to listen. I, who twice  
Their will had noted, spake : " O spirits ! secure,  
Whene'er the time may be, of peaceful end ;  
My limbs, nor crude, nor in mature old age,  
Have I left yonder : here they bear me, fed  
With blood, and sinew-strung. That I no more  
May live in blindness, hence I tend aloft.  
There is a dame on high, who wins for us  
This grace, by which my mortal through your realm  
I bear. But may your utmost wish soon meet  
Such full fruition, that the orb of heaven,  
Fullest of love, and of most ample space,  
Receive you ; as ye tell (upon my page  
Henceforth to stand recorded) who ye are ;  
And what this multitude, that at your backs  
Have past behind us." As one, mountain-bred,  
Rugged and clownish, if some city's walls  
He chance to enter, round him stares agape,  
Confounded and struck dumb ; e'en such appear'd  
Each spirit. But when rid of that amaze,  
(Not long the inmate of a noble heart),  
He, who before had question'd, thus resumed :  
" O blessed ! who, for death preparing, takest  
Experience of our limits, in thy bark ;  
Their crime, who not with us proceed, was that  
For which, as he did triumph, Cæsar<sup>1</sup> heard  
The shout of ' queen,' to taunt him. Hence their  
cry  
Of ' Sodom,' as they parted ; to rebuke  
Themselves, and aid the burning by their shame.  
Our sinning was Hermaphrodite : but we,  
Because the law of human kind we broke,  
Following like beasts our vile concupiscence,  
Hence parting from them, to our own disgrace  
Record the name of her, by whom the beast

<sup>1</sup> Cæsar.] For the opprobrium cast on Cæsar's effeminacy, see Suetonius, Julius Cæsar, c. 49.



In bestial fire was acted. Now our deeds  
 Thou know'st, and how we sinn'd. If thou by name  
 Wouldst haply know us, time permits not now  
 To tell so much, nor can I. Of myself  
 Learn what thou wishest. Guinicelli <sup>1</sup> I ;  
 Who having truly sorrow'd ere my last,  
 Already cleanse me." With such pious joy,  
 As the two sons upon their mother gazed  
 From sad Lycurgus <sup>2</sup> rescued ; such my joy  
 (Save that I more repress'd it) when I heard  
 From his own lips the name of him pronounced,  
 Who was a father to me, and to those  
 My betters, who have ever used the sweet  
 And pleasant rhymes of love. So nought I heard,  
 Nor spake ; but long time thoughtfully I went  
 Gazing on him ; and, only for the fire,  
 Approach'd not nearer. When my eyes were fed  
 By looking on him ; with such solemn pledge,  
 As forces credence, I devoted me  
 Unto his service wholly. In reply  
 He thus bespake me : " What from thee I hear  
 Is graved so deeply on my mind, the waves  
 Of Lethe shall not wash it off, nor make  
 A whit less lively. But as now thy oath  
 Has seal'd the truth, declare what cause impels  
 That love, which both thy looks and speech bewray."  
 " Those dulcet lays," I answer'd ; " which, as long  
 As of our tongue the beauty does not fade,  
 Shall make us love the very ink that traced them."  
 " Brother ! " he cried, and pointed at the shade  
 Before him, " there is one, whose mother speech  
 Doth owe to him a fairer ornament.

<sup>1</sup> *Guinicelli*.] See note to Canto xi. 96. <sup>2</sup> *Lycurgus*.] Statius, Theb. lib. iv. and v. Hypsipile had left her infant charge, the son of Lycurgus, on a bank, where it was destroyed by a serpent, when she went to show the Argive army the river of Langia ; and, on her escaping the effects of Lycurgus's resentment, the joy her own children felt at the sight of her was such, as our Poet felt on beholding his predecessor Guinicelli. The incidents are beautifully described in Statius, and seem to have made an impression on Dante, for he before (Canto xxii. 110) characterises Hypsipile as her—

Who show'd Langia's wave.

He <sup>1</sup> in love ditties, and the tales of prose,  
 Without a rival stands ; and lets the fools  
 Talk on, who think the songster of Limoges <sup>2</sup>  
 O'ertops him. Rumour and the popular voice  
 They look to, more than truth ; and so confirm  
 Opinion, ere by art or reason taught.  
 Thus many of the elder time cried up  
 Guittone,<sup>3</sup> giving him the prize, till truth  
 By strength of numbers vanquish'd. If thou own  
 So ample privilege, as to have gain'd  
 Free entrance to the cloister, whereof Christ  
 Is Abbot of the college ; say to him  
 One paternoster for me, far as needs <sup>4</sup>  
 For dwellers in this world, where power to sin  
 No longer tempts us." Haply to make way  
 For one that follow'd next, when that was said,  
 He vanish'd through the fire, as through the wave  
 A fish, that glances diving to the deep.

I, to the spirit he had shown me, drew  
 A little onward, and besought his name,  
 For which my heart, I said, kept gracious room.  
 He frankly thus began : " Thy courtesy <sup>5</sup>  
 So wins on me, I have nor power nor will  
 To hide me. I am Arnault ; and with songs,  
 Sorely waymenting for my folly past,  
 Through this ford of fire I wade, and see  
 The day, I hope for, smiling in my view.  
 I pray ye by the worth that guides ye up  
 Unto the summit of the scale, in time  
 Remember ye my sufferings." With such words  
 He disappear'd in the refining flame.

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note : *He.*] Arnault Daniel, a Provençal poet, who flourished at the end of the twelfth century. <sup>2</sup> *The songster of Limoges.*] Giraud de Borneil, of Sideuil, a castle in Limoges. He was a Troubadour, much admired and caressed in his day, and appears to have been in favour with the monarchs of Castile, Leon, Navarre, and Arragon. Editor's note : Giraud was called "the Master of the Troubadours." He died in 1220. <sup>3</sup> *Guittone.*] See Canto xxiv. 56. <sup>4</sup> *Far as needs.*] See Canto xi. 23. <sup>5</sup> *Thy courtesy.*] Arnault is here made to speak in his own tongue, the Provençal.

## CANTO XXVII

## ARGUMENT

An angel sends them forward through the fire to the last ascent, which leads to the terrestrial Paradise, situated on the summit of the mountain. They have not proceeded many steps on their way upward, when the fall of night hinders them from going farther; and our Poet, who has lain down with Virgil and Statius to rest, beholds in a dream two females, figuring the active and contemplative life. With the return of morning, they reach the height; and here Virgil gives Dante full liberty to use his own pleasure and judgment in the choice of his way, till he shall meet with Beatrice.

Now was the sun <sup>1</sup> so station'd, as when first  
His early radiance quivers on the heights,  
Where stream'd his Maker's blood; while Libra  
hangs

Above Hesperian Ebro; and new fires,  
Meridian, flash on Ganges' yellow tide.

So day was sinking, when the angel of God  
Appear'd before us. Joy was in his mien.  
Forth of the flame he stood upon the brink;  
And with a voice, whose lively clearness far  
Surpass'd our human, "Blessed <sup>2</sup> are the pure  
In heart," he sang: then near him as we came,  
"Go ye not further, holy spirits!" he cried,  
"Ere the fire pierce you: enter in; and list  
Attentive to the song ye hear from thence."

I, when I heard his saying, was as one  
Laid in the grave.<sup>3</sup> My hands together clasp'd,  
And upward stretching, on the fire I look'd;  
And busy fancy conjured up the forms  
Erewhile beheld alive consumed in flames.

The escorting spirits turn'd with gentle looks  
Toward me; and the Mantuan spake: "My son,

<sup>1</sup> *The sun.*] At Jerusalem it was dawn, in Spain, midnight, and in India noonday, while it was sunset in Purgatory. <sup>2</sup> *Blessed.*] Matt. v. 8.

<sup>3</sup> ——— *As one*

*Laid in the grave.*] Quale è colui che nella fossa è messo. Lombardi understands this of a man who is taken to execution in the manner described in the Inf., c. xix. 52. "Colui," he thinks, cannot be properly applied to a corse.

Here torment thou mayst feel, but canst not death.  
 Remember thee, remember thee, if I  
 Safe e'en on Geryon brought thee ; now I come  
 More near to God, wilt thou not trust me now ?  
 Of this be sure ; though in its womb that flame  
 A thousand years contain'd thee, from thy head  
 No hair should perish. If thou doubt my truth,  
 Approach ; and with thy hands thy vesture's hem  
 Stretch forth, and for thyself confirm belief.  
 Lay now all fear, oh ! lay all fear aside.  
 Turn hither, and come onward undismay'd."

I still, though conscience urged, no step advanced.

When still he saw me fix'd and obstinate,  
 Somewhat disturb'd he cried : " Mark now, my son,  
 From Beatrice thou art by this wall  
 Divided." As at Thisbe's name the eye  
 Of Pyramus was open'd (when life ebb'd  
 Fast from his veins), and took one parting glance,  
 While vermeil dyed the mulberry ;<sup>1</sup> thus I turn'd  
 To my sage guide, relenting, when I heard  
 The name that springs for ever in my breast.

He shook his forehead ; and, " How long," he  
 said,

" Linger we now ? " then smiled, as one would smile  
 Upon a child that eyes the fruit and yields.  
 Into the fire before me then he walk'd ;  
 And Statius, who erewhile no little space  
 Had parted us, he pray'd to come behind.

I would have cast me into molten glass  
 To cool me, when I enter'd ; so intense  
 Raged the conflagrant mass. The sire beloved,  
 To comfort me, as he proceeded, still  
 Of Beatrice talk'd. " Her eyes," saith he,  
 " E'en now I seem to view." From the other side  
 A voice, that sang, did guide us ; and the voice  
 Following, with heedful ear, we issued forth,  
 There where the path led upward. " Come,"<sup>2</sup> we  
 heard,

<sup>1</sup> *While vermeil dyed the mulberry.*] Ovid, *Metam.* lib. iv. 125.  
<sup>2</sup> *Come.*] Matt. xxv. 34.

“Come, blessed of my Father.” Such the sounds,  
That hail’d us from within a light, which shone  
So radiant, I could not endure the view.  
“The sun,” it added, “hastes : and evening comes.  
Delay not : ere the western sky is hung  
With blackness, strive ye for the pass.” Our way  
Upright within the rock arose, and faced  
Such part of heaven, that from before my steps  
The beams were shrouded of the sinking sun.

Nor many stairs were overpast, when now  
By fading of the shadow we perceived  
The sun behind us couch’d ; and ere one face  
Of darkness o’er its measureless expanse  
Involved the horizon, and the night her lot  
Held individual, each of us had made  
A stair his pallet ; not that will, but power,  
Had fail’d us, by the nature of that mount  
Forbidden further travel. As the goats,  
That late have skipt and wanton’d rapidly  
Upon the craggy cliffs, ere they had ta’en  
Their supper on the herb, now silent lie  
And ruminate beneath the umbrage brown,  
While noon-day rages ; and the goatherd leans  
Upon his staff, and leaning watches them :  
And as the swain, that lodges out all night  
In quiet by his flock, lest beast of prey  
Disperse them : even so all three abode,  
I as a goat, and as the shepherds they,  
Close pent on either side by shelving rock.

A little glimpse of sky was seen above ;  
Yet by that little I beheld the stars,  
In magnitude and lustre shining forth  
With more than wonted glory. As I lay,  
Gazing on them, and in that fit of musing,  
Sleep overcame me, sleep, that bringeth oft  
Tidings of future hap. About the hour,  
As I believe, when Venus from the east  
First lighten’d on the mountain, she whose orb  
Seems alway glowing with the fire of love,  
A lady young and beautiful, I dream’d,

Was passing o'er a lea ; and, as she came,  
 Methought I saw her ever and anon  
 Bending to cull the flowers ; and thus she sang :  
 " Know ye, whoever of my name would ask,  
 That I am Leah : <sup>1</sup> for my brow to weave  
 A garland, these fair hands unwearied ply.  
 To please me <sup>2</sup> at the crystal mirror, here  
 I deck me. But my sister Rachel, she <sup>3</sup>  
 Before her glass abides the livelong day,  
 Her radiant eyes beholding, charm'd no less,  
 Than I with this delightful task. Her joy  
 In contemplation, as in labour mine."

And now as glimmering dawn appear'd, that  
 breaks

More welcome to the pilgrim still, as he  
 Sojourns less distant on his homeward way,  
 Darkness from all sides fled, and with it fled  
 My slumber ; whence I rose, and saw my guide  
 Already risen. " That delicious fruit,  
 Which through so many a branch the zealous care  
 Of mortals roams in quest of, shall this day  
 Appease thy hunger." Such the words I heard  
 From Virgil's lip ; and never greeting heard,  
 So pleasant as the sounds. Within me straight  
 Desire so grew upon desire to mount,  
 Thenceforward at each step I felt the wings  
 Increasing for my flight. When we had run  
 O'er all the ladder to its topmost round,  
 As there we stood, on me the Mantuan fix'd  
 His eyes, and thus he spake : " Both fires, my son,  
 The temporal and eternal, thou hast seen ;  
 And art arrived, where of itself my ken  
 No further reaches. I, with skill and art,  
 Thus far have drawn thee. Now thy pleasure  
 take

<sup>1</sup> *I am Leah.*] By Leah is understood the active life, as Rachel figures the contemplative. <sup>2</sup> *To please me.*] "For the sake of that enjoyment which I shall have in beholding my God face to face, I thus exercise myself in good works." <sup>3</sup> *She.*] "Her delight is in admiring in her mirror, that is, in the Supreme Being, the light, or knowledge, that He vouchsafes her."



For guide. Thou hast o'ercome the steeper way,  
 O'ercome the straiter. Lo ! the sun, that darts  
 His beam upon thy forehead : lo ! the herb,<sup>1</sup>  
 The arborets and flowers, which of itself  
 This land pours forth profuse. Till those bright eyes<sup>2</sup>  
 With gladness come, which, weeping, made me haste  
 To succour thee, thou mayst or seat thee down,  
 Or wander where thou wilt. Expect no more  
 Sanction of warning voice or sign from me,  
 Free of thy own arbitrement to choose,  
 Discreet, judicious. To distrust thy sense  
 Were henceforth error. I invest thee then  
 With crown and mitre, sovereign o'er thyself."

## CANTO XXVIII

## ARGUMENT

Dante wanders through the forest of the terrestrial Paradise, till he is stopped by a stream, on the other side of which he beholds a fair lady, culling flowers. He speaks to her ; and she, in reply, explains to him certain things touching the nature of that place, and tells that the water, which flows between them, is here called Lethe, and in another place has the name of Eunoe.

THROUGH that celestial forest, whose thick shade  
 With lively greenness the new-springing day  
 Attemper'd, eager now to roam, and search  
 Its limits round, forthwith I left the bank ;  
 Along the champain leisurely my way  
 Pursuing, o'er the ground, that on all sides  
 Delicious odour breathed. A pleasant air,  
 That intermitted never, never veer'd,

<sup>1</sup> *Lo ! the herb.*] "In alium campum transit amœnissimum.—Ipse vero campus splendidus, suavis ac decorus quantæ magnitudinis, quantæ gloriæ, quantæque sit pulchritudinis, nulla lingua, nullusque sermo, potest enarrare : plenus est enim omni jucunditate, et gaudio, et lætitia. Ibi liliorum, et rosarum odor, ibi odoramentorum omnium, redolet fragrantia, ibi mannæ, omniumque eternarum deliciarum redundat abundantia. In hujus campi medio paradus est." Alberici, Visio, § 20.    <sup>2</sup> *Those bright eyes.*] The eyes of Beatrice.

Smote on my temples, gently, as a wind  
 Of softest influence : at which the sprays,  
 Obedient all, lean'd trembling to that part <sup>1</sup>  
 Where first the holy mountain casts his shade ;  
 Yet were not so disorder'd, but that still  
 Upon their top the feather'd quiristers  
 Applied their wonted art, and with full joy  
 Welcomed those hours of prime, and warbled shrill  
 Amid the leaves, that to their jocund lays  
 Kept tenour ; even as from branch to branch,  
 Along the piny forests on the shore  
 Of Chiassi, rolls the gathering melody,  
 When Eolus hath from his cavern loosed  
 The dripping south. Already had my steps,  
 Though slow, so far into that ancient wood  
 Transported me, I could not ken the place  
 Where I had enter'd ; when, behold ! my path  
 Was bounded by a rill, which, to the left,  
 With little rippling waters bent the grass  
 That issued from its brink. On earth no wave,  
 How clean soe'er, that would not seem to have  
 Some mixture in itself, compared with this,  
 Transpicious clear ; yet darkly on it roll'd,  
 Darkly beneath perpetual gloom, which ne'er  
 Admits or sun or moon-light there to shine.

My feet advanced not ; but my wondering eyes  
 Pass'd onward, o'er the streamlet, to survey  
 The tender may-bloom, flush'd through many a  
 hue,

In prodigal variety : and there,  
 As object, rising suddenly to view,  
 That from our bosom every thought beside  
 With the rare marvel chases, I beheld  
 A lady <sup>2</sup> all alone, who, singing, went,

<sup>1</sup> *To that part.*] The west.      <sup>2</sup> *A lady*] Most of the commentators suppose, that by this lady, who in the last Canto of the Purgatorio is called Matilda, is to be understood the Countess Matilda, who endowed the Holy See with the estates called the Patrimony of St. Peter, and died 1115. See G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. xx. But it seems more probable that she should be intended for an allegorical personage. Venturi accordingly supposes that she represents the active life. But, as Lombardi justly observes, we have had that already shadowed

And culling flower from flower, wherewith her way  
Was all o'er painted. "Lady beautiful!  
Thou, who (if looks, that use to speak the heart,  
Are worthy of our trust) with love's own beam  
Dost warm thee," thus to her my speech I framed;  
"Ah! please thee hither towards the streamlet bend  
Thy steps so near, that I may list thy song.  
Beholding thee and this fair place, methinks,  
I call to mind where wander'd and how look'd  
Proserpine, in that season, when her child  
The mother lost, and she the bloomy spring."

As when a lady, turning in the dance,  
Doth foot it featly, and advances scarce  
One step before the other to the ground;  
Over the yellow and vermilion flowers  
Thus turn'd she at my suit, most maiden-like,  
Vailing her sober eyes; and came so near,  
That I distinctly caught the dulcet sound.  
Arriving where the limpid waters now  
Laved the green sword, her eyes she deign'd to raise,  
That shot such splendour on me, as I ween  
Ne'er glanced from Cytherea's, when her son  
Had sped his keenest weapon to her heart.  
Upon the opposite bank she stood and smiled;  
As through her graceful fingers shifted still  
The intermingling dyes, which without seed  
That lofty land unbosoms. By the stream  
Three paces only were we sunder'd: yet,  
The Hellespont, where Xerxes pass'd it o'er  
(A curb for ever to the pride of man<sup>1</sup>),  
Was by Leander not more hateful held  
For floating, with inhospitable wave,  
'Twixt Sestus and Abydos, than by me  
That flood, because it gave no passage thence.

forth in the character of Leah; and he therefore suggests, that by Matilda may be understood that affection which we ought to bear towards the Holy Church and for which the lady above mentioned was so remarkable.

<sup>1</sup> *A curb for ever to the pride of man.*] Because Xerxes had been so humbled, when he was compelled to repass the Hellespont in one small bark, after having a little before crossed with a prodigious army, in the hopes of subduing Greece.

“ Strangers ye come ; and haply in this place,  
 That cradled human nature in her birth,  
 Wondering, ye not without suspicion view  
 My smiles : but that sweet strain of psalmody,  
 ‘ Thou, Lord ! hast made me glad,’<sup>1</sup> will give ye  
 light,  
 Which may uncloud your minds. And thou, who  
 stand’st

The foremost, and didst make thy suit to me,  
 Say if aught else thou wish to hear : for I  
 Came prompt to answer every doubt of thine.”

She spake ; and I replied : “ I know not how<sup>2</sup>  
 To reconcile this wave, and rustling sound  
 Of forest leaves, with what I late have heard  
 Of opposite report.” She answering thus :  
 “ I will unfold the cause, whence that proceeds,  
 Which makes thee wonder ; and so purge the cloud  
 That hath enwrapt thee. The First Good, whose  
 joy

Is only in Himself, created man,  
 For happiness ; and gave this goodly place,  
 His pledge and earnest of eternal peace.  
 Favour’d thus highly, through his own defect  
 He fell ; and here made short sojourn ; he fell,  
 And, for the bitterness of sorrow, changed  
 Laughter unblamed and ever-new delight.  
 That vapours none, exhaled from earth beneath,  
 Or from the waters (which, wherever heat  
 Attracts them, follow), might ascend thus far  
 To vex man’s peaceful state, this mountain rose  
 So high toward the heaven, nor fears the rage  
 Of elements contending ; from that part  
 Exempted, where the gate his limit bars.  
 Because the circumambient air, throughout,  
 With its first impulse circles still, unless  
 Aught interpose to check or thwart its course ;  
 Upon the summit, which on every side  
 To visitation of the impassive air

<sup>1</sup> *Thou, Lord ! hast made me glad.*] Ps. xcii. 4.  
*now.*] See Canto xxi. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *I know not*

Is open, doth that motion strike, and makes  
Beneath its sway the umbrageous wood resound :  
And in the shaken plant such power resides,  
That it impregnates with its efficacy  
The voyaging breeze, upon whose subtle plume  
*That*, wafted, flies abroad ; and the other land,<sup>1</sup>  
Receiving (as 'tis worthy in itself,  
Or in the clime, that warms it), doth conceive ;  
And from its womb produces many a tree  
Of various virtue. This when thou hast heard,  
The marvel ceases, if in yonder earth  
Some plant, without apparent seed, be found  
To fix its fibrous stem. And further learn,  
That with prolific foison of all seeds  
This holy plain is fill'd, and in itself  
Bears fruit that ne'er was pluck'd on other soil.

“ The water, thou behold'st, springs not from vein,  
Restored by vapour, that the cold converts ;  
As stream that intermittently repairs  
And spends his pulse of life ; but issues forth  
From fountain, solid, undecaying, sure :  
And, by the will omnific, full supply  
Feeds whatsoe'er on either side it pours ;  
On this, devolved with power to take away  
Remembrance of offence ; on that, to bring  
Remembrance back of every good deed done.  
From whence its name of Lethe on this part ;  
On the other, Eunoe : both of which must first  
Be tasted, ere it work ; the last exceeding  
All flavours else. Albeit thy thirst may now  
Be well contented, if I here break off,  
No more revealing ; yet a corollary  
I freely give beside : nor deem my words  
Less grateful to thee, if they somewhat pass

<sup>1</sup> *The other land.*] The continent, inhabited by the living, and separated from Purgatory by the ocean, is affected (and that diversely, according to the nature of the soil, or the climate) by a virtue, or efficacy, conveyed to it by the winds from plants growing in the terrestrial Paradise, which is situated on the summit of Purgatory ; and this is the cause why some plants are found on earth without any apparent seed to produce them.

The stretch of promise. They, whose verse of yore  
 The golden age recorded and its bliss,  
 On the Parnassian mountain, of this place  
 Perhaps had dream'd. Here was man guiltless ;  
     here  
 Perpetual spring,<sup>1</sup> and every fruit ; and this  
 The far-famed nectar." Turning to the bards,  
 When she had ceased, I noted in their looks  
 A smile at her conclusion ; then my face  
 Again directed to the lovely dame.

## CANTO XXIX

## ARGUMENT

The lady, who in a following Canto is called Matilda, moves along the side of the stream in a contrary direction to the current, and Dante keeps equal pace with her on the opposite bank. A marvellous sight, preceded by music, appears in view.

SINGING, as if enamour'd, she resumed  
 And closed the song, with " Blessed they <sup>2</sup> whose sins  
 Are cover'd." Like the wood-nymphs then, that  
     tripp'd

Singly across the sylvan shadows ; one  
 Eager to view, and one to escape the sun ;  
 So moved she on, against the current, up  
 The verdant rivage. I, her mincing step  
 Observing, with as tardy step pursued.

Between us not an hundred paces trod,  
 The bank, on each side bending equally,  
 Gave me to face the orient. Nor our way  
 Far onward brought us, when to me at once

<sup>1</sup> *Perpetual spring.*]

Ver erat æternum, placidique tepentibus auris  
 Mulcebant zephyri natos sine semine flores.

Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant.

Ovid, *Metam.* lib. i. v. III.

<sup>2</sup> *Blessed they.*] Ps. xxxii. 1.



She turn'd, and cried : " My brother ! look, and  
hearken."

And lo ! a sudden lustre ran across  
Through the great forest on all parts, so bright,  
I doubted whether lightning were abroad ;  
But that, expiring ever in the spleen  
That doth unfold it, and this during still,  
And waxing still in splendour, made me question  
What it might be : and a sweet melody  
Ran through the luminous air. Then did I chide,  
With warrantable zeal, the hardihood  
Of our first parent ; for that there, where earth  
Stood in obedience to the heavens, she only,  
Woman, the creature of an hour, endured not  
Restraint of any veil, which had she borne  
Devoutly, joys, ineffable as these,  
Had from the first, and long time since, been mine.

While, through that wilderness of primy sweets  
That never fade, suspense I walk'd, and yet  
Expectant of beatitude more high ;  
Before us, like a blazing fire, the air  
Under the green boughs glow'd ; and, for a song,  
Distinct the sound of melody was heard.

O ye thrice holy virgins ! for your sakes  
If e'er I suffer'd hunger, cold, and watching,  
Occasion calls on me to crave your bounty.  
Now through my breast let Helicon his stream  
Pour copious, and Urania <sup>1</sup> with her choir  
Arise to aid me ; while the verse unfolds  
Things, that do almost mock the grasp of thought.

Onward a space, what seem'd seven trees of  
gold

The intervening distance to mine eye  
Falsely presented ; but, when I was come  
So near them, that no lineament was lost  
Of those, with which a doubtful object, seen  
Remotely, plays on the misdeeming sense ;  
Then did the faculty, that ministers

<sup>1</sup> *Urania*.] Landino observes, that intending to sing of heavenly things, he rightly invokes Urania.

Discourse to reason, these for tapers of gold <sup>1</sup>  
 Distinguish ; and i' the singing trace the sound  
 "Hosanna." Above, their beauteous garniture  
 Flamed with more ample lustre, than the moon  
 Through cloudless sky at midnight, in her noon.

I turn'd me, full of wonder, to my guide ;  
 And he did answer with a countenance  
 Charged with no less amazement : whence my view  
 Reverted to those lofty things, which came  
 So slowly moving towards us, that the bride  
 Would have outstript them on her bridal day.

The lady call'd aloud : " Why thus yet burns  
 Affection in thee for these living lights,  
 And dost not look on that which follows them ? "

I straightway mark'd a tribe behind them walk,  
 As if attendant on their leaders, clothed  
 With raiment of such whiteness, as on earth  
 Was never. On my left, the watery gleam  
 Borrow'd, and gave me back, when there I look'd,  
 As in a mirror, my left side portray'd.

When I had chosen on the river's edge  
 Such station, that the distance of the stream  
 Alone did separate me ; there I stay'd  
 My steps for clearer prospect, and beheld  
 The flames go onward, leaving, as they went,  
 The air behind them painted as with trail  
 Of liveliest pencils ; <sup>2</sup> so distinct were mark'd  
 All those seven listed colours, whence the sun  
 Maketh his bow, and Cynthia her zone.  
 These streaming gonfalons did flow beyond  
 My vision ; and ten paces, as I guess,  
 Parted the outermost. Beneath a sky  
 So beautiful, came four and twenty elders, <sup>3</sup>  
 By two and two, with flower-de-luces crown'd.

<sup>1</sup> *Tapers of gold.*] See Rev. i. 12. The commentators are not agreed whether the seven sacraments of the Church, or the seven gifts of the Spirit are intended. <sup>2</sup> *Pencils.*] Since this translation was made, Perticari has affixed another sense to the word " pennelli," which he interprets " pennons" or " streamers." Monti, in his *Proposta*, highly applauds the discovery. <sup>3</sup> *Four and twenty elders.*] " Upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting." Rev. iv. 4.

All sang one song : “ Blessed be thou <sup>1</sup> among  
 The daughters of Adam ! and thy loveliness  
 Blessed for ever ! ” After that the flowers,  
 And the fresh herblets, on the opposite brink,  
 Were free from that elected race ; as light  
 In heaven doth second light, came after them  
 Four <sup>2</sup> animals, each crown’d with verdurous leaf.  
 With six wings each was plumed ; the plumage full  
 Of eyes ; and the eyes of Argus would be such,  
 Were they endued with life. Reader ! more rhymes  
 I will not waste in shadowing forth their form :  
 For other need so straitens, that in this  
 I may not give my bounty room. But read  
 Ezekiel ; <sup>3</sup> for he paints them, from the north  
 How he beheld them come by Chebar’s flood,  
 In whirlwind, cloud, and fire ; and even such  
 As thou shalt find them character’d by him,  
 Here were they ; save as to the pennons : there,  
 From him departing, John <sup>4</sup> accords with me.

The space, surrounded by the four, enclosed  
 A car triumphal : <sup>5</sup> on two wheels it came,  
 Drawn at a Gryphon’s <sup>6</sup> neck ; and he above

<sup>1</sup> *Blessed be thou.*] “ Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.” Luke i. 42. <sup>2</sup> *Four.*] The four Evangelists. <sup>3</sup> *Ezekiel.*] “ And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance ; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.” Ezek. i. 4, 5, 6. <sup>4</sup> *John.*] “ And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him.” Rev. iv. 8. “ Aliter senas alas propter senarii numeri perfectionem positum arbitror ; quia in sexta ætate, id est adveniente plenitudine temporum, hæc Apostolus peracta commemorat ; in novissimo enim animali conclusit omnia.” Primasii, Augustini discipuli, Episcopi Comment. lib. quinque in Apocal. Ed. Basil, 1544. “ With this interpretation it is very consonant that Ezekiel discovered in these animals only four wings, because his prophecy does not extend beyond the fourth age ; beyond that is the end of the synagogue and the calling of the Gentiles : whereas Dante beholding them in the sixth age, saw them with six wings, as did St. John.” Lombardi. <sup>5</sup> *A car triumphal.*] Either the Christian Church, or perhaps the Papal chair. <sup>6</sup> *Gryphon.*] Under the gryphon, an imaginary creature, the forepart of which is an eagle, and the hinder a lion, is shadowed forth the union of the divine and the human nature in Jesus Christ.

Stretch'd either wing uplifted, 'tween the midst  
 And the three listed hues, on each side, three ;  
 So that the wings did cleave or injure none ;  
 And out of sight they rose. The members, far  
 As he was bird, were golden ; white the rest,  
 With vermeil intervein'd. So beautiful  
 A car, in Rome, ne'er graced Augustus' pomp,  
 Or Africanus' : e'en the sun's itself  
 Were poor to this ; that chariot of the sun,  
 Erroneous, which in blazing ruin fell  
 At Tellus' prayer <sup>1</sup> devout, by the just doom  
 Mysterious of all-seeing-Jove. Three nymphs, <sup>2</sup>  
 At the right wheel, came circling in smooth dance :  
 The one so ruddy, that her form had scarce  
 Been known within a furnace of clear flame ;  
 The next did look, as if the flesh and bones  
 Were emerald ; snow new-fallen seem'd the third.  
 Now seem'd the white to lead, the ruddy now ;  
 And from her song who led, the others took  
 Their measure, swift or slow. At the other wheel,  
 A band quaternion, <sup>3</sup> each in purple clad,  
 Advanced with festal step, as, of them, one  
 The rest conducted ; <sup>4</sup> one, upon whose front  
 Three eyes were seen. In rear of all this group,  
 Two old men <sup>5</sup> I beheld, dissimilar  
 In raiment, but in port and gesture like,  
 Solid and mainly grave ; of whom, the one  
 Did show himself some favour'd counsellor  
 Of the great Coan, <sup>6</sup> him, whom nature made  
 To serve the costliest creature of her tribe :

<sup>1</sup> *Tellus' prayer.*] Ovid, *Metam.* lib. ii. v. 279. <sup>2</sup> *Three nymphs.*] The three evangelical virtues : the first Charity, the next Hope, and the third Faith. Faith may be produced by charity, or charity by faith, but the inducements to hope must arise either from one or other of these. <sup>3</sup> *A band quaternion.*] The four moral or cardinal virtues, of whom Prudence directs the others.

<sup>4</sup> ——— *One*

*The rest conducted.*] Prudence, described with three eyes, because she regards the past, the present, and the future. <sup>5</sup> *Two old men.*] St. Luke, the physician, characterized as the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, and St. Paul, represented with a sword. <sup>6</sup> *Of the great Coan.*] Hippocrates, "whom nature made for the benefit of her favourite creature, man."

His fellow mark'd an opposite intent ;  
 Bearing a sword, whose glitterance and keen edge,  
 E'en as I viewed it with the flood between,  
 Appall'd me. Next, four others <sup>1</sup> I beheld  
 Of humble seeming : and, behind them all,  
 One single old man, <sup>2</sup> sleeping as he came,  
 With a shrewd visage. And these seven, each  
 Like the first troop were habited ; but wore  
 No braid of lilies on their temples wreathed.  
 Rather, with roses and each vermeil flower,  
 A sight, but little distant, might have sworn,  
 That they were all on fire above their brow.

Whenas the car was o'er against me, straight  
 Was heard a thundering, at whose voice it seem'd  
 The chosen multitude were stay'd ; for there,  
 With the first ensigns, made they solemn halt.

2-28-7936

## CANTO XXX

### ARGUMENT

Beatrice descends from heaven, and rebukes the Poet.

Soon as that polar light, <sup>3</sup> fair ornament  
 Of the first heaven, which hath never known

<sup>1</sup> *Four others.*] "The commentators," says Venturi, "suppose these four to be the four Evangelists ; but I should rather take them to be four principal doctors of the Church." Yet both Landino and Vellutello expressly call them the authors of the Epistles, James, Peter, John, and Jude. <sup>2</sup> *One single old man.*] As some say, St. John, under the character of the author of the Apocalypse. But, in the poem attributed to Giacompo, the son of our Poet, which in some MSS. and in one of the earliest editions, accompanies the original of this work, and is descriptive of its plan, this old man is said to be Moses.

E'l vecchio, ch' era dietro a tutti loro,

Fu Moyse.

And the old man, who was behind them all,

Was Moses.

See No. 3459 of the Harl. MSS. in the British Museum.

<sup>3</sup> *That polar light.*] The seven candlesticks of gold, which he calls the polar light of heaven itself, because they perform the same office for Christians that the polar star does for mariners, in guiding them to their port.

Setting nor rising, nor the shadowy veil  
 Of other cloud than sin, to duty there  
 Each one convoying, as that lower doth  
 The steersman to his port, stood firmly fix'd ;  
 Forthwith the saintly tribe, who in the van  
 Between the Gryphon and its radiance came,  
 Did turn them to the car, as to their rest :  
 And one, as if commission'd from above,  
 In holy chant thrice shouted forth aloud ;  
 " Come,<sup>1</sup> spouse ! from Libanus " : and all the rest  
 Took up the song.—At the last audit, so  
 The blest shalt rise, from forth his cavern each  
 Uplifting lightly his new-vested flesh ;  
 As, on the sacred litter, at the voice  
 Authoritative of that elder, sprang  
 A hundred ministers and messengers  
 Of life eternal. " Blessed <sup>2</sup> thou, who comest ! "  
 And, " Oh ! " they cried, " from full hands <sup>3</sup> scatter ye  
 Unwithering lilies " : and, so saying, cast  
 Flowers over head and round them on all sides.

I have beheld, ere now, at break of day,  
 The eastern clime all roseate ; and the sky  
 Opposed, one deep and beautiful serene ;  
 And the sun's face so shaded, and with mists  
 Attemper'd, at his rising, that the eye  
 Long while endured the sight : thus, in a cloud  
 Of flowers, that from those hands angelic rose,  
 And down within and outside of the car  
 Fell showering, in white veil with olive wreathed,  
 A virgin <sup>4</sup> in my view appear'd, beneath  
 Green mantle, robed in hue of living flame :  
 And <sup>5</sup> o'er my spirit, that so long a time

<sup>1</sup> *Come.*] " Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me, from Lebanon." Song of Solomon, iv. 8. <sup>2</sup> *Blessed.*] " Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. xxi. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *From full hands.*] Manibus date lillia plenis.

Virg., *Æn. lib. vi.* 884.

<sup>4</sup> Editor's note: *A virgin.*] The word is " donna," " lady." Beatrice was not a virgin. <sup>5</sup> *And.*] His spirit, which had been so long unawed by the presence of Beatrice (for she had been ten years dead) now felt, through a secret influence proceeding from her, its ancient love revived, though his sight had not yet distinguished her.



Had from her presence felt no shuddering dread,  
Albeit mine eyes discern'd her not, there moved  
A hidden virtue from her, at whose touch  
The power of ancient love was strong within me.

No sooner on my vision streaming, smote  
The heavenly influence, which, years past, and e'en  
In childhood, thrill'd me, than towards Virgil I  
Turn'd me to leftward ; panting, like a babe,  
That flees for refuge to his mother's breast,  
If aught have terrified or work'd him woe :  
And would have cried, " There is no dram of blood,  
That doth not quiver in me. The old flame  
Throws out clear tokens of reviving fire."  
But Virgil had bereaved us of himself ;  
Virgil, my best loved father ; Virgil, he  
To whom I gave me up for safety : nor <sup>1</sup>  
All, our prime mother lost, avail'd to save  
My undew'd cheeks from blur of soiling tears.

" Dante ! weep not that Virgil leaves thee ; nay,  
Weep thou not yet : behoves thee feel the edge  
Of other sword ; and thou shalt weep for that."

As to the prow or stern, some admiral  
Paces the deck, inspiriting his crew,  
When 'mid the sail-yards all hands ply aloof ;  
Thus, on the left side of the car, I saw  
(Turning me at the sound of mine own name,  
Which here I am compell'd to register)  
The virgin station'd, who before appear'd  
Veil'd in that festive shower angelical.

Towards me, across the stream, she bent her eyes ;  
Though from her brow the veil descending, bound  
With foliage of Minerva, suffer'd not  
That I beheld her clearly : then with act  
Full royal, still insulting o'er her thrall,  
Added, as one who, speaking, keepeth back  
The bitterest saying, to conclude the speech :  
" Observe me well. I am, in sooth, I am  
Beatrice. What ! and hast thou deign'd at last

<sup>1</sup> Nor.] " Not all the beauties of the terrestrial Paradise in which  
I was were sufficient to allay my grief."

Approach the mountain ? Knewest not, O man !  
 Thy happiness is here ? ” Down fell mine eyes  
 On the clear fount ; but there, myself espying,  
 Recoil'd, and sought the greensword ; such a weight  
 Of shame was on my forehead. With a mien  
 Of that stern majesty, which doth surround  
 A mother's presence to her awe-struck child,  
 She look'd ; a flavour of such bitterness  
 Was mingled in her pity. There her words  
 Brake off ; and suddenly the angels sang,  
 “ In thee, O gracious Lord ! my hope hath been ” :  
 But <sup>1</sup> went no further than, “ Thou, Lord ! hast set  
 My feet in ample room.” As snow, that lies,  
 Amidst the living rafters <sup>2</sup> on the back  
 Of Italy, congeal'd, when drifted high  
 And closely piled by rough Sclavonian blasts ;  
 Breathe but the land whereon no shadow falls,<sup>3</sup>  
 And straightway melting it distils away,  
 Like a fire-wasted taper : thus was I,  
 Without a sigh or tear, or ever these  
 Did sing, that, with the chiming of heaven's sphere,  
 Still in their warbling chime : but when the strain  
 Of dulcet symphony express'd for me  
 Their soft compassion, more than could the words,  
 “ Virgin ! why so consumest him ? ” then, the ice  
 Congeal'd about my bosom, turn'd itself  
 To spirit and water ; and with anguish forth  
 Gush'd, through the lips and eyelids, from the heart.  
 Upon the chariot's same edge still she stood,  
 Immoveable ; and thus address'd her words  
 To those bright semblances with pity touch'd :  
 “ Ye in the eternal day your vigils keep ;

<sup>1</sup> But.] They sang the thirty-first Psalm, to the end of the eighth verse. What follows in that Psalm would not have suited the place or the occasion. <sup>2</sup> The living rafters.] “ Vive travi.” The leafless woods on the Apennine.

Fraxineæque trabes.

\* Virg., *Æn.* lib. vi. 181.

and Trabibusque obscurus acernis. *Ibid.*, lib. ix. 87.

<sup>3</sup> The land whereon no shadow falls.] “ When the wind blows from off Africa, where, at the time of the equinox, bodies, being under the equator, cast little or no shadow ; or, in other words, when the wind is south.”

So that nor night nor slumber, with close stealth,  
Conveys from you a single step, in all  
The goings on of time : thence, with more heed  
I shape mine answer, for his ear intended,  
Who there stands weeping ; that the sorrow now  
May equal the transgression. Not alone  
Through operation of the mighty orbs,  
That mark each seed to some predestined aim,  
As with aspect or fortunate or ill  
The constellations meet ; but through benign  
Largess of heavenly graces, which rain down  
From such a height as mocks our vision, this man  
Was, in the freshness of his being,<sup>1</sup> such,  
So gifted virtually, that in him  
All better habits wonderously had thrived.  
The more of kindly strength is in the soil,  
So much doth evil seed and lack of culture  
Mar it the more, and make it run to wildness.  
These looks sometime upheld him ; for I show'd  
My youthful eyes, and led him by their light  
In upright walking. Soon as I had reach'd  
The threshold of my second age,<sup>2</sup> and changed  
My mortal for immortal ; then he left me,  
And gave himself to others. When from flesh  
To spirit I had risen, and increase  
Of beauty and of virtue circled me,  
I was less dear to him, and valued less.  
His steps were turn'd into deceitful ways,  
Following false images of good, that make  
No promise perfect. Nor avail'd me aught  
To sue for inspirations, with the which,  
I, both in dreams of night, and otherwise,  
Did call him back ; of them, so little reck'd him.  
Such depth he fell, that all device was short  
Of his preserving, save that he should view

<sup>1</sup> *In the freshness of his being.*] Nella sua vita nuova. Some suppose our Poet alludes to the work so called, written in his youth.

<sup>2</sup> *The threshold of my second age.*] In the Convito, our Poet makes a division of human life into four ages, the first of which lasts till the twenty-fifth year. Beatrice, therefore, passed from this life to a better, about that period.

The children of perdition. To this end  
 I visited the purlieus of the dead :  
 And one, who hath conducted him thus high,  
 Received my supplications urged with weeping.  
 It were a breaking of God's high decree,  
 If Lethe should be past, and such food <sup>1</sup> tasted,  
 Without the cost of some repentant tear."

## CANTO XXXI

### ARGUMENT

Beatrice continues her reprehension of Dante, who confesses his error, and falls to the ground : coming to himself again, he is by Matilda drawn through the waters of Lethe, and presented first to the four virgins who figure the cardinal virtues ; these in their turn lead him to the Gryphon, a symbol of our Saviour ; and the three virgins, representing the evangelical virtues, intercede for him with Beatrice, that she would display to him her second beauty.

" O THOU ! " her words she thus without delay  
 Resuming, turn'd their point on me, to whom  
 They, but with lateral edge,<sup>2</sup> seem'd harsh before :  
 " Say thou, who stand'st beyond the holy stream,  
 If this be true. A charge, so grievous, needs  
 Thine own avowal." On my faculty  
 Such strange amazement hung, the voice expired  
 Imperfect, ere its organs gave it birth.

A little space refraining, then she spake :  
 " What dost thou muse on ? Answer me. The  
 wave

On thy remembrances of evil yet  
 Hath done no injury." A mingled sense  
 Of fear and of confusion, from my lips  
 Did such a " Yea " produce, as needed help  
 Of vision to interpret. As when breaks,  
 In act to be discharged, a cross-bow bent

<sup>1</sup> *Such food.*] The oblivion of sins.      <sup>2</sup> *With but lateral edge.*] The words of Beatrice, when not addressed directly to himself, but spoken to the angel of him, Dante had thought sufficiently harsh.

Beyond its pitch, both nerve and bow o'erstretch'd ;  
The flagging weapon feebly hits the mark :  
Thus, tears and sighs forth gushing, did I burst,  
Beneath the heavy load : and thus my voice  
Was slacken'd on its way. She straight began :  
“ When my desire invited thee to love  
The good, which sets a bound to our aspirings ;  
What bar of thwarting foss or linked chain  
Did meet thee, that thou so shouldst quit the hope  
Of further progress ? or what bait of ease,  
Or promise of allurement, led thee on  
Elsewhere, that thou elsewhere shouldst rather  
wait ? ”

A bitter sigh I drew, then scarce found voice  
To answer ; hardly to these sounds my lips  
Gave utterance, wailing : “ Thy fair looks with-  
drawn,  
Things present, with deceitful pleasures, turn'd  
My steps aside.” She answering spake : “ Hadst  
thou

Been silent, or denied what thou avow'st,  
Thou hadst not hid thy sin the more ; such eye  
Observes it. But whene'er the sinner's cheek  
Breaks forth into the precious-streaming tears  
Of self-accusing, in our court the wheel  
Of justice doth run counter to the edge.<sup>1</sup>  
Howe'er, that thou mayst profit by thy shame  
For errors past, and that henceforth more strength  
May arm thee, when thou hear'st the Syren-voice ;  
Lay thou aside the motive to this grief,  
And lend attentive ear, while I unfold  
How opposite a way my buried flesh  
Should have impell'd thee. Never didst thou spy,  
In art or nature, aught so passing sweet,  
As were the limbs that in their beauteous frame  
Enclosed me, and are scatter'd now in dust.  
If sweetest thing thus fail'd thee with my death,  
What, afterward, of mortal, should thy wish

<sup>1</sup> *Counter to the edge.*] “ The weapons of divine justice are blunted by the confession and sorrow of the offender.”

Have tempted? When thou first hadst felt the  
dart

Of perishable things, in my departing  
For better realms, thy wing thou shouldst have  
pruned

To follow me; and never stoop'd again,  
To 'bide a second blow, for a slight girl,  
Or other gaud as transient and as vain.<sup>1</sup>  
The new and inexperienced bird awaits,  
Twice it may be, or thrice, the fowler's aim;  
But in the sight of one whose plumes are full,  
In vain the net is spread, the arrow wing'd."

I stood, as children silent and ashamed  
Stand, listening, with their eyes upon the earth,  
Acknowledging their fault, and self-condemn'd.  
And she resumed: "If, but to hear, thus pains thee;  
Raise thou thy beard, and lo! what sight shall do."

With less reluctance yields a sturdy holm,  
Rent from its fibres by a blast, that blows  
From off the pole, or from Iarbas' land,<sup>2</sup>  
Than I at her behest my visage raised:  
And thus the face denoting by the beard,<sup>3</sup>  
I mark'd the secret sting her words convey'd.

No sooner lifted I mine aspect up,  
Than I perceived those primal creatures<sup>4</sup> cease  
Their flowery sprinkling; and mine eyes beheld  
(Yet unassured and wavering in their view)  
Beatrice; she, who towards the mystic shape,  
That joins two natures in one form, had turn'd:  
And, even under shadow of her veil,  
And parted by the verdant rill that flow'd  
Between, in loveliness she seem'd as much  
Her former self surpassing, as on earth  
All others she surpass'd. Remorseful goads

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: ——— *For a slight girl*  
*Or other gaud as transient and as vain.*] Beatrice alludes to Dante's  
unworthy life after her death. <sup>2</sup> *From Iarbas' land.*] The south.  
<sup>3</sup> *The beard.*] "I perceived, that when she desired me to raise my  
beard, instead of telling me to lift up my head, a severe reflection was  
implied on my want of that wisdom which should accompany the age  
of manhood." <sup>4</sup> *Those primal creatures.*] By the "primal creatures"  
are meant the angels, who were scattering the flowers on Beatrice.



Shot sudden through me. Each thing else, the more  
 Its love had late beguiled me, now the more  
 Was loathsome. On my heart so keenly smote  
 The bitter consciousness, that on the ground  
 O'erpower'd I fell: and what my state was then,  
 She knows, who was the cause. When now my  
 strength

Flow'd back, returning outward from the heart,  
 The lady,<sup>1</sup> whom alone I first had seen,  
 I found above me. "Loose me not," she cried:  
 "Loose not thy hold": and lo! had dragg'd me  
 high

As to my neck into the stream; while she,  
 Still as she drew me after, swept along,  
 Swift as a shuttle, bounding o'er the wave.

The blessed shore approaching, then was heard  
 So sweetly "Tu asperges me,"<sup>2</sup> that I  
 May not remember, much less tell the sound.

The beauteous dame, her arms expanding, clasp'd  
 My temples, and immersed me where 'twas fit  
 The wave should drench me: and, thence raising up,  
 Within the fourfold dance of lovely nymphs  
 Presented me so laved; and with their arm  
 They each did cover me. "Here are we nymphs,  
 And in the heaven are stars."<sup>3</sup> Or ever earth  
 Was visited of Beatrice, we,  
 Appointed for her handmaids, tended on her.  
 We to her eyes will lead thee: but the light  
 Of gladness, that is in them, well to scan,  
 Those yonder three,<sup>4</sup> of deeper ken than ours,  
 Thy sight shall quicken." Thus began their song:  
 And then they led me to the Gryphon's breast,  
 Where, turn'd toward us, Beatrice stood.  
 "Spare not thy vision. We have station'd thee

<sup>1</sup> *The lady.*] Matilda. <sup>2</sup> *Tu asperges me.*] "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Ps. li. 7. Sung by the choir, while the priest is sprinkling the people with holy water. Editor's note: The psalm begins, "Asperges me Domine," not "Tu asperges me." It is quoted right in the original. <sup>3</sup> *And in the heaven are stars.*] See Canto i. 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Those yonder three.*] Faith, hope, and charity.

Before the emeralds,<sup>1</sup> whence love, erewhile,  
Hath drawn his weapons on thee." As they spake,  
A thousand fervent wishes riveted  
Mine eyes upon her beaming eyes, that stood,  
Still fix'd toward the Gryphon, motionless.  
As the sun strikes a mirror, even thus  
Within those orbs the twyfold being shone ;  
For ever varying, in one figure now  
Reflected, now in other. Reader ! muse  
How wondrous in my sight it seem'd, to mark  
A thing, albeit stedfast in itself,  
Yet in its imaged semblance mutable.

Full of amaze, and joyous, while my soul  
Fed on the viand, whereof still desire  
Grows with satiety ; the other three,  
With gesture that declared a loftier line,  
Advanced : to their own carol, on they came  
Dancing, in festive ring angelical.

" Turn, Beatrice ! " was their song : " Oh ! turn  
Thy saintly sight on this thy faithful one,  
Who, to behold thee, many a wearisome pace  
Hath measured. Gracious at our prayer, vouchsafe  
Unveil to him thy cheeks ; that he may mark  
Thy second beauty, now conceal'd." O splendour !  
O sacred light eternal ! who is he,  
So pale with musing in Pierian shades,  
Or with that fount so lavishly imbued,  
Whose spirit should not fail him in the essay  
To represent thee such as thou didst seem,  
When under cope of the still-chiming heaven  
Thou gavest to open air thy charms reveal'd ?

<sup>1</sup> *The emeralds.*] The eyes of Beatrice.

## CANTO XXXII

## ARGUMENT

Dante is warned not to gaze too fixedly on Beatrice. The procession moves on, accompanied by Matilda, Statius, and Dante, till they reach an exceeding lofty tree, where divers strange chances befall.

MINE eyes with such an eager coveting  
 Were bent to rid them of their ten years' thirst,<sup>1</sup>  
 No other sense was waking : and e'en they  
 Were fenced on either side from heed of aught ;  
 So tangled, in its custom'd toils, that smile  
 Of saintly brightness drew me to itself :  
 When forcibly, toward the left, my sight  
 The sacred virgins turn'd ; for from their lips  
 I heard the warning sounds : " Too fix'd a gaze ! " <sup>2</sup>

Awhile my vision labour'd ; as when late  
 Upon the o'erstrained eyes the sun hath smote :  
 But soon,<sup>3</sup> to lesser object, as the view  
 Was now recover'd (lesser in respect  
 To that excess of sensible, whence late  
 I had perforce been sunder'd), on their right  
 I mark'd that glorious army wheel, and turn,  
 Against the sun and sevenfold lights, their front.  
 As when, their bucklers for protection raised,  
 A well-ranged troop, with portly banners curl'd,  
 Wheel circling, ere the whole can change their ground ;  
 E'en thus the goodly regiment of heaven,  
 Proceeding, all did pass us ere the car  
 Had sloped his beam. Attendant at the wheels

<sup>1</sup> *Their ten years' thirst.*] Beatrice had been dead ten years.  
<sup>2</sup> *Too fix'd a gaze.*] The allegorical interpretation of Vellutello, whether it be considered as justly inferable from the text or not, conveys so useful a lesson, that it deserves our notice. " The understanding is sometimes so intently engaged in contemplating the light of divine truth in the Scriptures, that it becomes dazzled, and is made less capable of attaining such knowledge, than if it had sought after it with greater moderation." <sup>3</sup> *But soon.*] As soon as his sight was recovered, so as to bear the view of that glorious procession, which, splendid as it was, was yet less so than Beatrice, by whom his vision had been overpowered, &c.

The damsels turn'd ; and on the Gryphon moved  
 The sacred burden, with a pace so smooth,  
 No feather on him trembled. The fair dame,  
 Who through the wave had drawn me, companioned  
 By Statius and myself, pursued the wheel,  
 Whose orbit, rolling, mark'd a lesser arch.

Through the high wood, now void, (the more her  
 blame,  
 Who by the serpent was beguiled), I pass'd,  
 With step in cadence to the harmony  
 Angelic. Onward had we moved, as far,  
 Perchance, as arrow at three several flights  
 Full wing'd had sped, when from her station down  
 Descended Beatrice. With one voice  
 All murmur'd " Adam " ; circling next a plant <sup>1</sup>  
 Despoil'd of flowers and leaf, on every bough.  
 Its tresses,<sup>2</sup> spreading more as more they rose,  
 Were such, as 'midst their forest wilds, for height,  
 The Indians might have gazed at. " Blessed thou,  
 Gryphon ! <sup>3</sup> whose beak hath never pluck'd that tree  
 Pleasant to taste : for hence the appetite  
 Was warp'd to evil." Round the stately trunk  
 Thus shouted forth the rest, to whom return'd  
 The animal twice-gender'd : " Yea ! for so  
 The generation of the just are saved."  
 And turning to the chariot-pole, to foot  
 He drew it of the widow'd branch, and bound

<sup>1</sup> *A plant.*] Lombardi has conjectured, with much probability, that this tree is not (as preceding commentators had supposed) merely intended to represent the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but that the Roman empire is figured by it. Among the maxims maintained by our Poet, as the same commentator observes, were these : that one monarchy had been willed by Providence, and was necessary for universal peace ; and that this monarchy, by right of justice and by the divine ordinance belonged to the Roman people only. His *Treatise de Monarchiâ* was written indeed to inculcate these maxims, and to prove that the temporal monarchy depends immediately on God, and should be kept as distinct as possible from the authority of the Pope. <sup>2</sup> *Its tresses.*] " I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great." Dan. iv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> ——— *Blessed thou,*

*Gryphon !*] Our Saviour's submission to the Roman empire appears to be intended, and particularly His injunction, " to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

There, left unto the stock <sup>1</sup> whereon it grew.

As when large floods of radiance <sup>2</sup> from above  
Stream, with that radiance mingled, which ascends  
Next after setting of the scaly sign,  
Our plants then burgein, and each wears anew  
His wonted colours, ere the sun have yoked  
Beneath another star his flamy steeds ;  
Thus putting forth a hue more faint than rose,  
And deeper than the violet, was renew'd  
The plant, erewhile in all its branches bare.  
Unearthly was the hymn, which then arose.  
I understood it not, nor to the end  
Endured the harmony. Had I the skill  
To pencil forth how closed the unpitying eyes <sup>3</sup>  
Slumbering, when Syrinx warbled (eyes that paid  
So dearly for their watching), then, like painter,  
That with a model paints, I might design  
The manner of my falling into sleep.  
But feign who will the slumber cunningly,  
I pass it by to when I waked ; and tell,  
How suddenly a flash of splendour rent  
The curtain of my sleep, and one cries out,  
“ Arise : what dost thou ? ” As the chosen three,  
On Tabor's mount, admitted to behold  
The blossoming of that fair tree, <sup>4</sup> whose fruit  
Is coveted of angels, and doth make  
Perpetual feast in heaven ; to themselves  
Returning, at the word whence deeper sleeps <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *There, left unto the stock.*] Dante here seems, I think, to intimate what he has attempted to prove at the conclusion of the second book *De Monarchiâ* ; namely, that our Saviour, by His suffering under the sentence, not of Herod, but of Pilate, who was the delegate of the Roman emperor, acknowledged and confirmed the supremacy of that emperor over the whole world ; for if, as he argues, all mankind were become sinners through the sin of Adam, no punishment, that was inflicted by one who had a right of jurisdiction over less than the whole human race, could have been sufficient to satisfy for the sins of all men. See note to *Paradiso*, c. vi. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *When large floods of radiance.*] When the sun enters into Aries, the constellation next to that of the Fish.

<sup>3</sup> *The unpitying eyes.*] See Ovid, *Metam.* lib. i. 689.

<sup>4</sup> *The blossoming of that fair tree.*] Our Saviour's transfiguration. “ As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.” Solomon's Song, ii. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Deeper sleeps.*] The sleep of death, in the instance of the ruler of the synagogue's daughter and of Lazarus.

Were broken, they their tribe diminish'd saw ;  
 Both Moses and Elias gone, and changed  
 The stole their master wore ; thus to myself  
 Returning, over me beheld I stand  
 The piteous one,<sup>1</sup> who, cross the stream, had brought  
 My steps. " And where," all doubting, I exclaim'd,  
 " Is Beatrice ? "—" See her," she replied,  
 " Beneath the fresh leaf, seated on its root.  
 Behold the associate choir, that circles her.  
 The others, with a melody more sweet  
 And more profound, journeying to higher realms,  
 Upon the Gryphon tend." If there her words  
 Were closed, I know not ; but mine eyes had now  
 Ta'en view of her, by whom all other thoughts  
 Were barr'd admittance. On the very ground  
 Alone she sat, as she had there been left  
 A guard upon the wain, which I beheld  
 Bound to the twyform beast. The seven nymphs  
 Did make themselves a cloister round about her ;  
 And, in their hands, upheld those lights <sup>2</sup> secure  
 From blast septentrion and the gusty south.

" A little while thou shalt be forester here ;  
 And citizen shalt be, for ever with me,  
 Of that true Rome,<sup>3</sup> wherein Christ dwells a Roman  
 To profit the misguided world, keep now  
 Thine eyes upon the car ; and what thou seest,  
 Take heed thou write, returning to that place." <sup>4</sup>

Thus Beatrice : at whose feet inclined  
 Devout, at her behest, my thought and eyes  
 I, as she bade, directed. Never fire,  
 With so swift motion, forth a stormy cloud  
 Leap'd downward from the welkin's furthest bound,  
 As I beheld the bird of Jove <sup>5</sup> descend  
 Down through the tree ; and, as he rush'd, the rind  
 Disparting crush beneath him ; buds much more,  
 And leaflets. On the car, with all his might

<sup>1</sup> *The piteous one.*] Matilda.

<sup>2</sup> *Those lights.*] The tapers of gold.

<sup>3</sup> *Of that true Rome.*] Of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> *To that place.*] To the earth.

<sup>5</sup> *The bird of Jove.*] This, which is imitated from Ezek. xvii. 3, 4, is typical of the persecutions which the Church sustained from the Roman emperors.



He struck ; whence, staggering, like a ship it reel'd,  
At random driven, to starboard now, o'ercome,  
And now to larboard, by the vaulting waves.

Next, springing up into the chariot's womb,  
A fox <sup>1</sup> I saw, with hunger seeming pined  
Of all good food. But, for his ugly sins  
The saintly maid rebuking him, away  
Scampering he turn'd, fast as his hide-bound corpse  
Would bear him. Next, from whence before he came,  
I saw the eagle dart into the hull  
O' the car, and leave it with his feathers lined : <sup>2</sup>  
And then a voice, like that which issues forth  
From heart with sorrow rived, did issue forth  
From heaven, and " O poor bark of mine ! " it cried,  
" How badly art thou freighted." Then it seem'd  
That the earth open'd, between either wheel ;  
And I beheld a dragon <sup>3</sup> issue thence,  
That through the chariot fix'd his forked train ;  
And like a wasp, that draggeth back the sting,  
So drawing forth his baleful train, he dragg'd  
Part of the bottom forth ; and went his way,  
Exulting. What remain'd, as lively turf  
With green herb, so did clothe itself with plumes, <sup>4</sup>  
Which haply had, with purpose chaste and kind,  
Been offer'd ; and therewith were clothed the wheels,  
Both one and other, and the beam, so quickly,  
A sigh were not breathed sooner. Thus transform'd,  
The holy structure, through its several parts,  
Did put forth heads ; <sup>5</sup> three on the beam, and one

<sup>1</sup> *A fox.*] By the fox probably is represented the treachery of the heretics. <sup>2</sup> *With his feathers lined.*] In allusion to the donations made by Constantine to the Church. <sup>3</sup> *A dragon.*] Probably Mahomet.

<sup>4</sup> *With plumes.*] The increase of wealth and temporal dominion, which followed the supposed gift of Constantine. <sup>5</sup> *Heads.*] By the seven heads, it is supposed with sufficient probability, are meant the seven capital sins : by the three with two horns, pride, anger, and avarice, injurious both to man himself and to his neighbour : by the four with one horn, gluttony, gloominess, concupiscence, and envy, hurtful, at least in their primary effects, chiefly to him who is guilty of them. Vellutello refers to Rev. xvii. Landino, who is followed by Lombardi, understands the seven heads to signify the seven sacraments, and the ten horns the ten commandments. Compare Inf., c. xix. 112.

On every side : the first like oxen horn'd ;  
 But with a single horn upon their front,  
 The four. Like monster, sight hath never seen.  
 O'er it <sup>1</sup> methought there sat, secure as rock  
 On mountain's lofty top, a shameless whore,  
 Whose ken roved loosely round her. At her side,  
 As 't were that none might bear her off, I saw  
 A giant stand ; and ever and anon  
 They mingled kisses. But, her lustful eyes  
 Chancing on me to wander, that fell minion  
 Scourged her from head to foot all o'er ; then full  
 Of jealousy, and fierce with rage, unloosed  
 The monster, and dragg'd on,<sup>2</sup> so far across  
 The forest, that from me its shades alone  
 Shielded the harlot and the new-form'd brute.

3 - 14 - 157

## CANTO XXXIII

### ARGUMENT

After a hymn sung, Beatrice leaves the tree, and takes with her the seven virgins, Matilda, Statius, and Dante. She then darkly predicts to our Poets some future events. Lastly, the whole band arrive at the fountain, from whence the two streams, Lethe and Eunoe, separating, flow different ways ; and Matilda, at the desire of Beatrice, causes our Poet to drink of the latter stream.

“ THE heathen,<sup>3</sup> Lord ! are come ” : responsive thus,  
 The trinal now, and now the virgin band  
 Quaternion, their sweet psalmody began,  
 Weeping ; and Beatrice listen'd, sad  
 And sighing, to the song, in such a mood,  
 That Mary, as she stood beside the cross,  
 Was scarce more changed. But when they gave her  
 place  
 To speak, then, risen upright on her feet,

<sup>1</sup> *O'er it.*] The harlot is thought to represent the state of the Church under Boniface VIII. and the giant to figure Philip IV. of France.  
<sup>2</sup> *Dragg'd on.*] The removal of the Pope's residence from Rome to Avignon is pointed at. <sup>3</sup> *The heathen.*] “ O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance.” Ps. lxxix. 1.

She, with a colour glowing bright as fire,  
 Did answer : " Yet a little while,<sup>1</sup> and ye  
 Shall see me not ; and, my beloved sisters !  
 Again a little while, and ye shall see me."

Before her then she marshal'd all the seven ;  
 And, beckoning only, motion'd me, the dame,  
 And that remaining sage,<sup>2</sup> to follow her.

So on she pass'd ; and had not set, I ween,  
 Her tenth step to the ground, when, with mine  
 eyes,

Her eyes encounter'd ; and, with visage mild,  
 " So mend thy pace," she cried, " that if my words  
 Address thee, thou mayst still be aptly placed  
 To hear them." Soon as duly to her side  
 I now had hasten'd : " Brother ! " she began,  
 " Why makest thou no attempt at questioning,  
 As thus we walk together ? " Like to those  
 Who, speaking with too reverent an awe  
 Before their betters, draw not forth the voice  
 Alive unto their lips, befell me then  
 That I in sounds imperfect thus began :  
 " Lady ! what I have need of, that thou know'st ;  
 And what will suit my need." She answering  
 thus :

" Of fearfulness and shame, I will that thou  
 Henceforth do rid thee ; that thou speak no more,  
 As one who dreams. Thus far be taught of me :  
 The vessel which thou saw'st the serpent break,  
 Was, and is not : <sup>3</sup> let him, who hath the blame,  
 Hope not to scare God's vengeance with a sop.<sup>4</sup>  
 Without an heir for ever shall not be

<sup>1</sup> *Yet a little while.*] " A little while, and ye shall not see Me ; and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me." John xvi. 16. <sup>2</sup> *That remaining sage.*] Statius. <sup>3</sup> *Was, and is not.*] " The beast that was, and is not." Rev. xvii. 11. <sup>4</sup> *Hope not to scare God's vengeance with a sop.*] " Let not him who hath occasioned the destruction of the Church, that vessel which the serpent brake, hope to appease the anger of the Deity by any outward acts of religious, or rather superstitious ceremony ; such as was that, in our Poet's time, performed by a murderer at Florence, who imagined himself secure from vengeance, if he ate a sop of bread in wine upon the grave of the person murdered, within the space of nine days."

That eagle,<sup>1</sup> he, who left the chariot plumed,  
 Which monster made it first and next a prey.  
 Plainly I view, and therefore speak, the stars  
 E'en now approaching, whose conjunction, free  
 From all impediment and bar, brings on  
 A season, in the which, one sent from God  
 (Five hundred, five, and ten, do mark him out),  
 That foul one, and the accomplice of her guilt,  
 The giant, both, shall slay. And if perchance  
 My saying, dark as Themis or as Sphinx,  
 Fail to persuade thee (since like them it foils  
 The intellect with blindness), yet erelong  
 Events shall be the Naiads,<sup>2</sup> that will solve  
 This knotty riddle ; and no damage light <sup>3</sup>  
 On flock or field. Take heed ; and as these words  
 By me are utter'd, teach them even so  
 To those who live that life, which is a race  
 To death : and when thou writest them, keep in  
 mind  
 Not to conceal how thou hast seen the plant,  
 That twice <sup>4</sup> hath now been spoil'd. This whoso  
 robs,  
 This whoso plucks, with blasphemy of deed

<sup>1</sup> *That eagle.*] He prognosticates that the Emperor of Germany will not always continue to submit to the usurpations of the Pope, and foretells the coming of Henry VII., Duke of Luxemburg, signified by the numerical figures DVX ; or, as Lombardi supposes, of Can Grande della Scala, appointed the leader of the Ghibelline forces. It is unnecessary to point out the imitation of the Apocalypse in the manner of this prophecy. Troya assigns reasons for applying the prediction to Ugucione della Faggiola rather than to Henry or Can Grande. *Veltro Allegorico di Dante*. Ediz. 1826, p. 143. But see my note, *Inf.*, i. 102. <sup>2</sup> *The Naiads.*] Dante, it is observed, has been led into a mistake by a corruption in the text of Ovid's *Metam.* l. vii. 757, where he found—

Carmina Naiades non intellecta priorum  
 Solvunt.

instead of Carmina Naiades non intellecta priorum  
 Solverat.

As it has since been amended by Heinsius. Lombardi, after Rose Morando, questions the propriety of this emendation, and refers to Pausanias, where "the Nymphs" are spoken of as expounders of oracles, for a vindication of the Poet's accuracy. <sup>3</sup> *No damage light.*] Editor's note : See Ovid, *Metam.* vii. <sup>4</sup> *Twice.*] First by the eagle and next by the giant. See the last Canto, v. 110, and v. 154.

Sins against God, who for His use alone  
 Creating hallow'd it. For taste of this,  
 In pain and in desire, five thousand years <sup>1</sup>  
 And upward, the first soul did yearn for Him  
 Who punish'd in Himself the fatal gust.

"Thy reason slumbers, if it deem this height,  
 And summit thus inverted,<sup>2</sup> of the plant,  
 Without due cause: and were not vainer thoughts,  
 As Elsa's numbing waters,<sup>3</sup> to thy soul.  
 And their fond pleasures had not dyed it dark  
 As Pyramus the mulberry; thou hadst seen,<sup>4</sup>  
 In such momentous circumstances alone,  
 God's equal justice morally implied  
 In the forbidden tree. But since I mark thee,  
 In understanding, harden'd into stone,  
 And, to that hardness, spotted too and stain'd,  
 So that thine eye is dazzled at my word;  
 I will, that, if not written, yet at least  
 Painted thou take it in thee, for the cause,  
 That one brings home his staff inwreathed with  
 palm."<sup>5</sup>

I thus: "As wax by seal, that changeth not  
 Its impress, now is stamp'd my brain by thee.  
 But wherefore soars thy wish'd-for speech so high  
 Beyond my sight, that loses it the more,  
 The more it strains to reach it?"—"To the end  
 That thou mayst know," she answer'd straight, "the  
 school,

That thou hast follow'd; and how far behind,

<sup>1</sup> *Five thousand years.*] That such was the opinion of the Church, Lombardi shows by a reference to Baronius. Martyr. Rom. Dec. 25. Anno a creatione mundi, quando a principio creavit Deus cœlum et terram, quinquies millesimo centesimo nonagesimo—Jesus Christus—conceptus. Edit. Col. Agripp. 4to, 1610, p. 858. <sup>2</sup> *Inverted.*] The branches, unlike those of other trees, spreading more widely the higher they rose. See the last Canto, v. 39. <sup>3</sup> *Elsa's numbing waters.*] The Elsa, a little stream, which flows into the Arno about twenty miles below Florence, is said to possess a petrifying quality. <sup>4</sup> *Thou hadst seen.*] This is obscure. But it would seem as if he meant to inculcate his favourite doctrine of the inviolability of the empire, and of the care taken by Providence to protect it. <sup>5</sup> *That one brings home his staff inwreathed with palm.*] "For the same cause that the *palmer*, returning from Palestine, brings home his staff, or bourdon, bound with palm," that is, to show where he has been.

When following my discourse, its learning halts :  
 And mayst behold your art,<sup>1</sup> from the divine  
 As distant, as the disagreement is  
 'Twixt earth and heaven's most high and rapturous  
 orb."

" I not remember," I replied, " that e'er  
 I was estranged from thee ; nor for such fault  
 Doth conscience chide me." Smiling she return'd :  
 " If thou canst not remember, call to mind  
 How lately thou hast drunk of Lethe's wave ;  
 And, sure as smoke doth indicate a flame,  
 In that forgetfulness itself conclude  
 Blame from thy alienated will incurr'd.  
 From henceforth, verily, my words shall be  
 As naked, as will suit them to appear  
 In thy unpractised view." More sparkling now,  
 And with retarded course, the sun possess'd  
 The circle of mid-day, that varies still  
 As the aspect varies of each several clime ;  
 When, as one, sent in vaward of a troop  
 For escort, pauses, if perchance he spy  
 Vestige of somewhat strange and rare ; so paused <sup>2</sup>  
 The sevenfold band, arriving at the verge  
 Of a dun umbrage hoar, such as is seen,  
 Beneath green leaves and gloomy branches, oft  
 To overbrow a bleak and alpine cliff.  
 And, where they stood, before them, as it seem'd,  
 I, Tigris and Euphrates <sup>3</sup> both, beheld  
 Forth from one fountain issue ; and, like friends,  
 Linger at parting. " O enlightening beam !

<sup>1</sup> *Mayst behold your art.*] The second persons, singular and plural, are here used intentionally by our author, the one referring to himself alone, the second to mankind in general. Compare Inf., xi. 107. <sup>2</sup> *So paused.*] Lombardi imagines that the seven nymphs, who represent the four cardinal and the three evangelical virtues, are made to stop at the verge of the shade, because retirement is the friend of every virtuous quality and spiritual gift.

<sup>3</sup> *I, Tigris and Euphrates.*]

Quaque caput rapido tollit cum Tigride magnus

Euphrates, quos non diversis fontibus edit

Persis.

Lucan, Phars. lib. iii. 258.

Tigris et Euphrates uno se fonte resolvunt.

Boëtius, de Consol. Philosoph. lib. v. Metr. l.



O glory of our kind ! beseech thee say  
What water this, which, from one source derived,  
Itself removes to distance from itself ? ”

To such entreaty answer thus was made :  
“ Entreat Matilda, that she teach thee this.”  
And here, as one who clears himself of blame  
Imputed, the fair dame return’d : “ Of me  
He this and more hath learnt ; and I am safe  
That Lethe’s water hath not hid it from him.”

And Beatrice : “ Some more pressing care,  
That oft the memory ’reaves, perchance hath made  
His mind’s eye dark. But lo, where Eunoe flows !  
Lead thither ; and, as thou art wont, revive  
His fainting virtue.” As a courteous spirit,  
That proffers no excuses, but as soon  
As he hath token of another’s will,  
Makes it his own ; when she had ta’en me, thus  
The lovely maiden moved her on, and call’d  
To Statius, with an air most lady-like :  
“ Come thou with him.” Were further space  
allow’d,

Then, Reader ! might I sing, though but in part,  
That beverage, with whose sweetness I had ne’er  
Been sated. But, since all the leaves are full,  
Appointed for this second strain, mine art  
With warning bridle checks me. I return’d  
From the most holy wave, regenerate,  
E’en as new plants renew’d with foliage new.  
Pure and made apt for mounting to the stars.



# PARADISO

## CANTO I

### ARGUMENT

The Poet ascends with Beatrice towards the first heaven ; and is by her resolved of certain doubts which arise in his mind.

His glory, by whose might all things are moved,  
Pierces the universe, and in one part  
Sheds more resplendence, elsewhere less. In heaven,  
That largeliest of his light partakes, was I,  
Witness of things, which, to relate again,  
Surpasseth power of him who comes from thence ;  
For that, so near approaching its desire,  
Our intellect is to such depth absorb'd,  
That memory cannot follow. Nathless all,  
That in my thoughts I of that sacred realm  
Could store, shall now be matter of my song.

Benign Apollo ! this last labour aid ;  
And make me such a vessel of thy worth,  
As thy own laurel claims, of me beloved.  
Thus far <sup>1</sup> hath one of steep Parnassus' brows  
Sufficed me ; henceforth, there is need of both  
For my remaining enterprize. Do thou <sup>2</sup>  
Enter into my bosom, and there breathe  
So, as when Marsyas <sup>3</sup> by thy hand was dragg'd  
Forth from his limbs, unsheathed. O power divine !  
If thou to me of thine impart so much,  
That of that happy realm the shadow'd form

<sup>1</sup> *Thus far.*] He appears to mean nothing more than that this part of his poem will require a greater exertion of his powers than the former. <sup>2</sup> *Do thou.*] Make me thine instrument ; and, through me, utter such sound as when thou didst contend with Marsyas.

<sup>3</sup> *Marsyas.*] Ovid, *Metam.* lib. vi. fab. 7.

Traced in my thoughts I may set forth to view ;  
 Thou shalt behold me of thy favour'd tree  
 Come to the foot, and crown myself with leaves :  
 For to that honour thou, and my high theme  
 Will fit me. If but seldom, mighty Sire !  
 To grace his triumph, gathers thence a wreath  
 Cæsar, or bard (more shame for human wills  
 Depraved), joy to the Delphic god must spring  
 From the Peneian foliage, when one breast  
 Is with such thirst inspired. From a small spark  
 Great flame hath risen : after me, perchance,  
 Others with better voice may pray, and gain,  
 From the Cyrrhæan city, answer kind.

Through divers passages, the world's bright lamp  
 Rises to mortals ; but through that <sup>1</sup> which joins  
 Four circles with the threefold cross, in best  
 Course, and in happiest constellation <sup>2</sup> set,  
 He comes ; and, to the worldly wax, best gives  
 Its temper and impression. Morning there, <sup>3</sup>  
 Here eve was well nigh by such passage made ;  
 And whiteness had o'erspread that hemisphere,  
 Blackness the other part : when to the left <sup>4</sup>  
 I saw Beatrice turn'd, and on the sun  
 Gazing, as never eagle fix'd his ken.  
 As from the first a second beam <sup>5</sup> is wont  
 To issue, and reflected upwards rise,  
 Even as a pilgrim bent on his return ;  
 So of her act, that through the eyesight pass'd  
 Into my fancy, mine was form'd : and straight,  
 Beyond our mortal wont, I fix'd mine eyes

<sup>1</sup> *Through that.*] "Where the four circles, the horizon, the zodiac, the equator, and equinoctial colure join ; the last three intersecting each other so as to form three crosses, as may be seen in the armillary sphere." <sup>2</sup> *In happiest constellation.*] Aries. Some understand the planet Venus by the "miglior stella." <sup>3</sup> *Morning there.*] It was morning where he then was, and about eventide on the earth. <sup>4</sup> *To the left.*] Being in the opposite hemisphere to ours, Beatrice, that she may behold the rising sun, turns herself to the left. <sup>5</sup> *As from the first a second beam.*] "Like a reflected sunbeam," which he compares to a pilgrim hastening homewards. Sic ut vir in peregrinatione constitutus, omni studio, omnique conatu domum redire festinat, ac retrorsum non respicit sed ad domum, quam reliquerat, reverti desiderat. Alberici, Visio, § 25.

Upon the sun. Much is allow'd us there,  
That here exceeds our power ; thanks to the place  
Made <sup>1</sup> for the dwelling of the human kind.

I suffer'd it not long ; and yet so long,  
That I beheld it bickering sparks around,  
As iron that comes boiling from the fire.<sup>2</sup>  
And suddenly upon the day appear'd  
A day new-risen ; as he, who hath the power,  
Had with another sun bedeck'd the sky.

Her eyes fast fix'd on the eternal wheels,<sup>3</sup>  
Beatrice stood unmoved ; and I with ken  
Fix'd upon her, from upward gaze removed,  
At her aspect, such inwardly became  
As Glaucus,<sup>4</sup> when he tasted of the herb  
That made him peer among the ocean gods :  
Words may not tell of that transhuman change ;  
And therefore let the example serve, though weak,  
For those whom grace hath better proof in store.

If <sup>5</sup> I were only what thou didst create,  
Then newly, Love ! by whom the heaven is ruled ;  
Thou know'st, who by thy light didst bear me up.  
Whenas the wheel which thou dost ever guide,  
Desired Spirit ! with its harmony,  
Temper'd of thee and measured, charm'd mine ear  
Then seem'd to me so much of heaven <sup>6</sup> to blaze  
With the sun's flame, that rain or flood ne'er made  
A lake so broad. The newness of the sound,  
And that great light, inflamed me with desire,  
Keener than e'er was felt, to know their cause.

Whence she, who saw me, clearly as myself,  
To calm my troubled mind, before I ask'd,

<sup>1</sup> *Made.*] And therefore best adapted, says Venturi, to the good temperament and vigour of the human body and its faculties. The Poet speaks of the terrestrial paradise where he then was. <sup>2</sup> *As iron that comes boiling from the the fire.*] *Ardentem, et scintillas emittentem, ac si ferrum cum de fornace trahitur.* Alberici, Visio, § 5. This simile is repeated, § 16. <sup>3</sup> *Eternal wheels.*] The heavens, eternal, and always circling. <sup>4</sup> *As Glaucus.*] Ovid, *Metam.* lib. xiii. fab. 9. <sup>5</sup> *If.*] "Thou, O divine Spirit, knowest whether I had not risen above my human nature, and were not merely such as Thou hadst then formed me." <sup>6</sup> *So much of heaven.*] The sphere of fire, as Lombardi well explains it.

Open'd her lips, and gracious thus began :  
 " With false imagination thou thyself  
 Makest dull ; so that thou seest not the thing,  
 Which thou hadst seen, had that been shaken off.  
 Thou art not on the earth as thou believest ;  
 For lightning, scaped from its own proper place,  
 Ne'er ran, as thou hast hither now return'd."

Although divested of my first-raised doubt  
 By those brief words accompanied with smiles,  
 Yet in new doubt was I entangled more,  
 And said : " Already satisfied, I rest  
 From admiration deep ; but now admire  
 How I above those lighter bodies rise."

Whence, after utterance of a piteous sigh,  
 She towards me bent her eyes, with such a look,  
 As on her frenzied child a mother casts ;  
 Then thus began : " Among themselves all things  
 Have order ; and from hence the form,<sup>1</sup> which  
 makes

The universe resemble God. In this  
 The higher creatures see the printed steps  
 Of that eternal worth, which is the end  
 Whither the line is drawn.<sup>2</sup> All natures lean,  
 In this their order, diversly ; some more,  
 Some less approaching to their primal source.  
 Thus they to different havens are moved on  
 Through the vast sea of being, and each one  
 With instinct given, that bears it in its course :  
 This to the lunar sphere directs the fire ;  
 This moves the hearts of mortal animals ;  
 This the brute earth together knits, and binds.  
 Nor only creatures, void of intellect,  
 Are aim'd at by this bow ; but even those,  
 That have intelligence and love, are pierced.  
 That Providence, who so well orders all,  
 With her own light makes ever calm the heaven,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *From hence the form.*] This order it is, that gives to the universe the form of unity, and therefore of resemblance to God. <sup>2</sup> *Whither the line is drawn.*] All things, as they have their beginning from the Supreme Being, so are they referred to Him again. <sup>3</sup> *The heaven.*] The empyrean, which is always motionless.



In which the substance, that hath greatest speed,<sup>1</sup>  
 Is turn'd : and thither now, as to our seat  
 Predestined, we are carried by the force  
 Of that strong cord, that never looses dart  
 But at fair aim and glad. Yet it is true,  
 That as, oft-times, but ill accords the form  
 To the design of art, through sluggishness  
 Or unreplying matter ; so this course <sup>2</sup>  
 Is sometimes quitted by the creature, who  
 Hath power, directed thus, to bend elsewhere ;  
 As from a cloud the fire is seen to fall,  
 From its original impulse warp'd to earth,  
 By vitious fondness. Thou no more admire  
 Thy soaring (if I rightly deem), than lapse  
 Of torrent downwards from a mountain's height.  
 There would in thee for wonder be more cause,  
 If, free of hindrance, thou hadst stay'd below,  
 As living fire unmoved upon the earth."

So said, she turn'd toward the heaven her face.

7-4-1939

## CANTO II

### ARGUMENT

Dante and his celestial guide enter the moon. The cause of the spots or shadows, which appear in that body, is explained to him.

ALL ye, who in small bark have following sail'd,  
 Eager to listen, on the adventurous track  
 Of my proud keel, that singing cuts her way,  
 Backward return with speed, and your own shores  
 Revisit ; nor put out to open sea,  
 Where losing me, perchance ye may remain  
 Bewilder'd in deep maze. The way I pass,  
 Ne'er yet was run : Minerva breathes the gale ;  
 Apollo guides me ; and another Nine,

<sup>1</sup> *The substance, that hath greatest speed.*] The primum mobile.

<sup>2</sup> *This course.*] Some beings, abusing the liberty given them by God, are repugnant to the order established by Him.

To my rapt sight, the arctic beams reveal.  
 Ye other few who have outstretch'd the neck  
 Timely for food of angels, on which here  
 They live, yet never know satiety ;  
 Through the deep brine ye fearless may put out  
 Your vessel ; marking well the furrow broad  
 Before you in the wave, that on both sides  
 Equal returns. Those, glorious, who pass'd o'er  
 To Colchos, wonder'd not as ye will do,  
 When they saw Jason following the plough.

The increate perpetual thirst,<sup>1</sup> that draws  
 Toward the realm of God's own form, bore us  
 Swift almost as the heaven ye behold.

Beatrice upward gazed, and I on her ;  
 And in such space as on the notch a dart  
 Is placed, then loosen'd flies, I saw myself  
 Arrived, where wonderous thing engaged my sight.  
 Whence she, to whom no care of mine was hid,  
 Turning to me, with aspect glad as fair,  
 Bespake me : " Gratefully direct thy mind  
 To God, through whom to this first star<sup>2</sup> we  
 come."

Meseem'd as if a cloud had cover'd us,  
 Translucent, solid, firm, and polish'd bright,  
 Like adamant, which the sun's beam had smit.  
 Within itself the ever-during pearl  
 Received us ; as the wave a ray of light  
 Receives, and rests unbroken. If I then  
 Was of corporeal frame, and it transcend  
 Our weaker thought, how one dimension thus  
 Another could endure, which needs must be  
 If body enter body ; how much more  
 Must the desire inflame us to behold  
 That essence, which discovers by what means  
 God and our nature join'd ! There will be seen  
 That, which we hold through faith ; not shown by  
 proof,  
 But in itself intelligibly plain,

<sup>1</sup> *The increate perpetual thirst.*] The desire of celestial beatitude, natural to the soul.    <sup>2</sup> *This first star.*] The moon.

E'en as the truth <sup>1</sup> that man at first believes.

I answer'd : " Lady ! I with thoughts devout,  
Such as I best can frame, give thanks to Him,  
Who hath removed me from the mortal world.  
But tell, I pray thee, whence the gloomy spots  
Upon this body, which below on earth  
Give rise to talk of Cain <sup>2</sup> in fabling quaint ? "

She somewhat smiled, then spake : " If mortals err  
In their opinion, when the key of sense  
Unlocks not, surely wonder's weapon keen  
Ought not to pierce thee : since thou find'st, the wings  
Of reason to pursue the senses' flight  
Are short. But what thy own thought is, declare."

Then I : " What various here above appears,  
Is caused, I deem, by bodies dense or rare." <sup>3</sup>

She then resumed : " Thou certainly wilt see  
In falsehood thy belief o'erwhelm'd, if well  
Thou listen to the arguments which I  
Shall bring to face it. The eighth sphere displays  
Numberless lights,<sup>4</sup> the which, in kind and size,  
May be remark'd of different aspects :  
If rare or dense of that were cause alone,  
One single virtue then would be in all ;  
Alike distributed, or more, or less.  
Different virtues needs must be the fruits  
Of formal principles ; and these, save one,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *E'en as the truth.*] " Like a truth, that does not need demonstration, but is self-evident." Thus Plato, at the conclusion of the sixth book of the Republic, lays down four principles of information in the human mind : " 1st, intuition of self-evident truth, *νόησις* ; 2nd, demonstration by reasoning, *διάνοια* ; 3rd, belief on testimony, *πίστις* ; 4th, probability, or conjecture, *εἰκασία*." <sup>2</sup> *Cain.*] Compare Inf., Canto xx. 123, and note.  
<sup>3</sup> *By bodies dense or rare.*] Lombardi observes, that the opinion respecting the spots in the moon, which Dante represents himself as here yielding to the arguments of Beatrice, is professed by our author in the Convito, so that we may conclude that work to have been composed before this portion of the Divina Commedia. " The shadow in the moon is nothing else but the rarity of its body, which hinders the rays of the sun from terminating and being reflected, as in other parts of it." P. 70. <sup>4</sup> *Numberless lights.*] The fixed stars, which differ both in bulk and splendour. <sup>5</sup> *Save one.*] " Except that principle of rarity and denseness which thou hast assigned." By " formal principles," *principi formali* are meant " constituent or essential causes."

Will by thy reasoning be destroy'd. Beside,  
If rarity were of that dusk the cause,  
Which thou inquirest, either in some part  
That planet must throughout be void, nor fed  
With its own matter ; or, as bodies share  
Their fat and leanness, in like manner this  
Must in its volume change the leaves.<sup>1</sup> The first,  
If it were true, had through the sun's eclipse  
Been manifested, by transparency  
Of light, as through aught rare beside effused.  
But this is not. Therefore remains to see  
The other cause : and, if the other fall,  
Erroneous so must prove what seem'd to thee.  
If not from side to side this rarity  
Pass through, there needs must be a limit, whence  
Its contrary no further lets it pass.  
And hence the beam, that from without proceeds,  
Must be pour'd back ; as colour comes, through glass  
Reflected, which behind it lead conceals.  
Now wilt thou say, that there of murkier hue,  
Than, in the other part, the ray is shown,  
By being thence refracted further back.  
From this perplexity will free thee soon  
Experience, if thereof thou trial make,  
The fountain whence your arts derive their streams  
Three mirrors shalt thou take, and two remove  
From thee alike ; and more remote the third,  
Betwixt the former pair, shall meet thine eyes :  
Then turn'd toward them, cause behind thy back  
A light to stand, that on the three shall shine,  
And thus reflected come to thee from all.  
Though that, beheld most distant, do not stretch  
A space so ample, yet in brightness thou  
Wilt own it equaling the rest. But now,  
As under snow the ground, if the warm ray  
Smites it, remains dismantled of the hue  
And cold, that cover'd it before ; so thee,  
Dismantled in thy mind, I will inform

<sup>1</sup> *Change the leaves.*] Would, like leaves of parchment, be darker in some part than others.

With light so lively, that the tremulous beam  
 Shall quiver where it falls. Within the heaven,<sup>1</sup>  
 Where peace divine inhabits, circles round  
 A body, in whose virtue lies the being  
 Of all that it contains. The following heaven,  
 That hath so many lights, this being divides,  
 Through different essences, from it distinct,  
 And yet contain'd within it. The other orbs  
 Their separate distinctions variously  
 Dispose, for their own seed and produce apt.  
 Thus do these organs of the world proceed,  
 As thou beholdest now, from step to step ;  
 Their influences from above deriving,  
 And thence transmitting downwards. Mark me well ;  
 How through this passage to the truth I ford,  
 The truth thou lovest ; that thou henceforth, alone,  
 Mayst know to keep the shallows, safe, untold.

“ The virtue and motion of the sacred orbs,  
 As mallet by the workman's hand, must needs  
 By blessed movers<sup>2</sup> be inspired. This heaven,<sup>3</sup>  
 Made beauteous by so many luminaries,  
 From the deep spirit,<sup>4</sup> that moves its circling sphere,  
 Its image takes and impress as a seal :  
 And as the soul, that dwells within your dust,  
 Through members different, yet together form'd,  
 In different powers resolves itself ; e'en so  
 The intellectual efficacy unfolds  
 Its goodness multiplied throughout the stars ;  
 On its own unity revolving still.  
 Different virtue<sup>5</sup> compact different

<sup>1</sup> *Within the heaven.*] According to our Poet's system, there are ten heavens. The heaven, “where peace divine inhabits,” is the empyrean ; the body within it, that “circles round,” is the primum mobile ; “the following heaven,” that of the fixed stars ; and “the other orbs,” the seven lower heavens, are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon. <sup>2</sup> *By blessed movers.*] By angels.

<sup>3</sup> *This heaven.*] The heaven of fixed stars. <sup>4</sup> *The deep spirit.*] The moving angel. <sup>5</sup> *Different virtue.*] “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for one star differeth from another star in glory.” 1 Cor. xv. 41. The words are nearly Plato's, whom St. Paul seems to have had in view throughout this part of his argument. *Μία μὲν [δυνάμις] ἡλίου· μία δὲ, σελήνης· μία δὲ, τῶν πάντων ἀστρῶν, κ.τ.λ.* Epinomis, Ed. Bip. v. ix. p. 262.

Makes with the precious body it enlivens,  
 With which it knits, as life in you is knit.  
 From its original nature full of joy,  
 The virtue mingled <sup>1</sup> through the body shines,  
 As joy through pupil of the living eye.  
 From hence proceeds that which from light to light  
 Seems different, and not from dense or rare.  
 This is the formal cause, that generates,  
 Proportion'd to its power, the dusk or clear."

4-11-39

### CANTO III

#### ARGUMENT

In the moon Dante meets with Piccarda, the sister of Forese, who tells him that this planet is allotted to those, who, after having made profession of chastity and a religious life, had been compelled to violate their vows; and she then points out to him the spirit of the Empress Costanza.

THAT sun,<sup>2</sup> which erst with love my bosom warm'd,  
 Had of fair truth unveil'd the sweet aspect,  
 By proof of right, and of the false reproof;  
 And I, to own myself convinced and free  
 Of doubt, as much as needed, raised my head  
 Erect for speech. But soon a sight appear'd,  
 Which, so intent to mark it, held me fix'd,  
 That of confession I no longer thought.

As through translucent and smooth glass, or wave,  
 Clear and unmoved, and flowing not so deep  
 As that its bed is dark, the shape returns  
 So faint of our impictured lineaments,  
 That, on white forehead set, a pearl as strong  
 Comes to the eye; such saw I many a face,  
 All stretch'd to speak; from whence I straight conceived,

<sup>1</sup> *The virtue mingled.*] Virg., Æn. lib. vi. 724. Principio cœlum, &c. *That sun.*] Beatrice.



Delusion <sup>1</sup> opposite to that, which raised,  
Between the man and fountain, amorous flame.

Sudden, as I perceived them, deeming these  
Reflected semblances, to see of whom  
They were, I turn'd mine eyes, and nothing saw ;  
Then turn'd them back, directed on the light  
Of my sweet guide, who, smiling, shot forth beams  
From her celestial eyes. " Wonder not thou,"  
She cried, " at this my smiling, when I see  
Thy childish judgment ; since not yet on truth  
It rests the foot, but, as it still is wont,  
Makes thee fall back in unsound vacancy.  
True substances are these, which thou behold'st,  
Hither through failure of their vow exiled.  
But speak thou with them ; listen, and believe,  
That the true light, which fills them with desire,  
Permits not from its beams their feet to stray."

Straight to the shadow, which for converse seem'd  
Most earnest, I address'd me : and began  
As one by over-eagerness perplex'd :

" O spirit, born for joy ! who in the rays  
Of life eternal, of that sweetness know'st  
The flavour, which, not tasted, passes far  
All apprehension ; me it well would please,  
If thou wouldst tell me of thy name, and this  
Your station here." Whence she with kindness  
prompt,

And eyes glistening with smiles : " Our charity,  
To any wish by justice introduced,  
Bars not the door ; no more than she above,  
Who would have all her court be like herself.  
I was a virgin sister in the earth :  
And if thy mind observe me well, this form,  
With such addition graced of loveliness,  
Will not conceal me long ; but thou wilt know  
Piccarda,<sup>2</sup> in the tardiest sphere thus placed,

<sup>1</sup> *Delusion*.] " An error the contrary to that of Narcissus ; because he mistook a shadow for a substance ; I, a substance for a shadow."

<sup>2</sup> *Piccarda*.] The sister of Corso Donati, and of Forese whom we have seen in the Purgatorio, Canto xxiii. Petrarch has been supposed to allude to this lady in his Triumph of Chastity, v. 160, &c.

Here 'mid these other blessed also blest.  
Our hearts, whose high affections burn alone  
With pleasure from the Holy Spirit conceived.  
Admitted to His order, dwell in joy.  
And this condition, which appears so low,  
Is for this cause assign'd us, that our vows  
Were, in some part, neglected and made void."

Whence I to her replied : " Something divine  
Beams in your countenances wonderous fair ;  
From former knowledge quite transmuting you.  
Therefore to recollect was I so slow.  
But what thou say'st hath to my memory  
Given now such aid, that to retrace your forms  
Is easier. Yet inform me, ye, who here  
Are happy ; long ye for a higher place,  
More to behold, and more in love to dwell ? "

She with those other spirits gently smiled ;  
Then answer'd with such gladness, that she seem'd  
With love's first flame to glow : " Brother ! our will  
Is, in composure, settled by the power  
Of charity, who makes us will alone  
What we possess, and nought beyond desire :  
If we should wish to be exalted more,  
Then must our wishes jar with the high will  
Of Him, who sets us here ; which in these orbs  
Thou wilt confess not possible, if here  
To be in charity must needs befall,  
And if her nature well thou contemplate.  
Rather it is inherent in this state  
Of blessedness, to keep ourselves within  
The divine will, by which our wills with His  
Are one. So that as we, from step to step,  
Are placed throughout this kingdom, pleases all,  
Even as our King, who in us plants His will ;  
And in His will is our tranquillity :  
It is the mighty ocean, whither tends  
Whatever it creates and nature makes."

Then saw I clearly how each spot in heaven  
Is Paradise, though with like gracious dew  
The supreme virtue shower not over all.

But as it chances, if one sort of food  
 Hath satiated, and of another still  
 The appetite remains, that this is ask'd,  
 And thanks for that return'd; e'en so did I,  
 In word and motion, bent from her to learn  
 What web it was,<sup>1</sup> through which she had not drawn  
 The shuttle to its point. She thus began:  
 "Exalted worth and perfectness of life  
 The Lady<sup>2</sup> higher up inshrine in heaven,  
 By whose pure laws upon your nether earth  
 The robe and veil they wear; to that intent,  
 That e'en till death they may keep watch, or sleep,  
 With their great bridegroom, who accepts each vow,  
 Which to His gracious pleasure love conforms.  
 I from the world, to follow her, when young  
 Escaped; and, in her vesture mantling me,  
 Made promise of the way her sect enjoins.  
 Thereafter men, for ill than good more apt,  
 Forth snatch'd me from the pleasant cloister's pale.  
 God knows<sup>3</sup> how, after that, my life was framed.  
 This other splendid shape, which thou behold'st  
 At my right side, burning with all the light  
 Of this our orb, what of myself I tell  
 May to herself apply. From her, like me

<sup>1</sup> *What web it was.*] "What vow of religious life it was that she had been hindered from completing, had been compelled to break."

<sup>2</sup> *The Lady.*] St. Clare, the foundress of the order called after her. She was born of opulent and noble parents at Assisi in 1193 and died in 1253. See Biogr. Univ. t. i. p. 598, 8vo. Paris, 1813.

<sup>3</sup> *God knows.*] Rodolfo da Tossignano, Hist. Seraph. Relig. P. i. p. 138, as cited by Lombardi, relates the following legend of Piccarda:—"Her brother Corso, inflamed with rage against his virgin sister, having joined with him Farinata, an infamous assassin, and twelve other abandoned ruffians, entered the monastery by a ladder, and carried away his sister forcibly to his own house; and then tearing off her religious habit, compelled her to go in a secular garment to her nuptials. Before the spouse of Christ came together with her new husband, she knelt down before a crucifix and recommended her virginity to Christ. Soon after her whole body was smitten with leprosy, so as to strike grief and horror into the beholders; and thus in a few days, through the divine disposal, she passed with a palm of virginity to the Lord." Perhaps, adds the worthy Franciscan, our Poet not being able to certify himself entirely of this occurrence, has chosen to pass it over discreetly, by making Piccarda say—

God knows how, after that, my life was framed.

A sister, with like violence were torn  
 The saintly folds, that shaded her fair brows.  
 E'en when she to the world again was brought  
 In spite of her own will and better wont,  
 Yet not for that the bosom's inward veil  
 Did she renounce. This is the luminary  
 Of mighty Constance,<sup>1</sup> who from that loud blast,  
 Which blew the second <sup>2</sup> over Suabia's realm,  
 That power produced, which was the third and last."

She ceased from further talk, and then began  
 "Ave Maria" singing; and with that song  
 Vanish'd, as heavy substance through deep wave.

Mine eye, that, far as it was capable,  
 Pursued her, when in dimness she was lost,  
 Turn'd to the mark where greater want impell'd,  
 And bent on Beatrice all its gaze.

But she, as lightning, beam'd upon my looks;  
 So that the sight sustain'd it not at first.

Whence I to question her became less prompt.

<sup>1</sup> *Constance.*] Daughter of Roger II., King of Sicily, who being taken by force out of a monastery where she had professed, was married to the Emperor Henry VI. and by him was mother to Frederick II. She was fifty years old or more at the time, and "because it was not credited that she could have a child at that age, she was delivered in a pavilion, and it was given out that any lady, who pleased, was at liberty to see her. Many came, and saw her; and the suspicion ceased." Ricordano Malaspina, in Muratori Rer. It. Script. t. viii. p. 939; and G. Villani, in the same words, Hist. lib. v. c. xvi. The French translator above mentioned speaks of her having poisoned her husband. The death of Henry VI. is recorded in the Chronicon Siciliae, by an anonymous writer (Muratori, t. x.), but not a word of his having been poisoned by Constance; and Ricordano Malaspina even mentions her decease as happening before that of her husband, Henry V., for so this author, with some others, terms him. <sup>2</sup> *The second.*] Henry VI., son of Frederick I., was the second emperor of the house of Suabia; and his son, Frederick II., "the third and last."

## CANTO IV

## ARGUMENT

While they still continue in the moon, Beatrice removes certain doubts which Dante had conceived respecting the place assigned to the blessed, and respecting the will absolute or conditional. He inquires whether it is possible to make satisfaction for a vow broken.

BETWEEN two kinds of food,<sup>1</sup> both equally  
Remote and tempting, first a man might die  
Of hunger, ere he one could freely choose.  
E'en so would stand a lamb between the maw  
Of two fierce wolves, in dread of both alike :  
E'en so between two deer <sup>2</sup> a dog would stand.  
Wherefore, if I was silent, fault nor praise  
I to myself impute ; by equal doubts  
Held in suspense ; since of necessity  
It happen'd. Silent was I, yet desire  
Was painted in my looks ; and thus I spake  
My wish more earnestly than language could.

As Daniel,<sup>3</sup> when the haughty king he freed  
From ire, that spurr'd him on to deeds unjust  
And violent ; so did Beatrice then.

“ Well I discern,” she thus her words address'd,  
“ How thou art drawn by each of these desires ;<sup>4</sup>  
So that thy anxious thought is in itself  
Bound up and stifled, nor breathes freely forth.

<sup>1</sup> *Between two kinds of food.*] “ Si aliqua dico sunt penitus æqualia, non magis movetur homo ad unum quam ad aliud ; sicut famelicus, si habet cibum æqualiter appetibilem in diversis partibus, et secundum æqualem distantiam, non magis movetur ad unum quam ad alterum.” Thomas Aquinas, Summ. Theolog. i<sup>ma</sup>, ii<sup>da</sup>. Partis. Questio. xiii. Art. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Between two deer.*] Tigris ut, auditis, diversâ valle duorum  
Extimulata fame, mugitibus armentorum,  
Nescit utro potius ruat. et ruree ardet utroque.  
Ovid, Metam. lib. v. 166.

<sup>3</sup> *Daniel.*] See Dan. ii. Beatrice did for Dante what Daniel did for Nebuchadnezzar, when he freed the king from the uncertainty respecting his dream, which had enraged him against the Chaldeans. Lombardi conjectures that “ Fe sì Beatrice ” should be read, instead of “ Fessi Beatrice ” ; and his conjecture has since been confirmed by the Monte Cassino MS. <sup>4</sup> *By each of these desires.*] His desire to have each of the doubts, which Beatrice mentions, resolved.

Thou arguest : if the good intent remain ;  
 What reason that another's violence  
 Should stint the measure of my fair desert ?

“ Cause too thou find'st for doubt, in that it seems,  
 That spirits to the stars, as Plato <sup>1</sup> deem'd,  
 Return. These are the questions which thy will  
 Urge equally ; and therefore I, the first,  
 Of that <sup>2</sup> will treat which hath the more of gall.<sup>3</sup>  
 Of seraphim <sup>4</sup> he who is most enskied,  
 Moses and Samuel, and either John,  
 Choose which thou wilt, nor even Mary's self,  
 Have not in any other heaven their seats,  
 Than have those spirits which so late thou saw'st ;  
 Nor more or fewer years exist ; but all  
 Make the first circle <sup>5</sup> beauteous, diversly  
 Partaking of sweet life, as more or less  
 Afflation of eternal bliss pervades them.  
 Here were they shown thee, not that fate assigns  
 This for their sphere, but for a sign to thee  
 Of that celestial furthest from the height.  
 Thus needs, that ye may apprehend, we speak :  
 Since from things sensible alone ye learn  
 That, which, digested rightly, after turns  
 To intellectual. For no other cause  
 The Scripture, condescending graciously  
 To your perception, hands and feet to God  
 Attributes, nor so means : and holy church

<sup>1</sup> Plato.] *Ξυστήσεαι δὲ, κ.τ.λ.* Plato, *Timæus*, v. ix. p. 326. Edit. Bip. “The Creator, when He had framed the universe, distributed to the stars an equal number of souls, appointing to each soul its several star.” <sup>2</sup> Of that.] Plato's opinion.  
<sup>3</sup> Which hath the more of gall.] Which is the more dangerous. <sup>4</sup> Of seraphim.] “He amongst the seraphim who is most nearly united with God, Moses, Samuel, and both the Johns, the Baptist and the Evangelist, dwell not in any other heaven than do those spirits whom thou hast just beheld ; nor does even the blessed Virgin herself dwell in any other : nor is their existence either longer or shorter than that of these spirits.” She first resolves his doubt whether souls do not return to their own stars, as he had read in the *Timæus* of Plato. Angels, then, and beatified spirits, she declares, dwell all and eternally together, only partaking more or less of the divine glory, in the empyrean : although, in condescension to human understanding, they appear to have different spheres allotted to them. <sup>5</sup> The first circle.] The empyrean.



Doth represent with human countenance  
 Gabriel, and Michäel, and him who made  
 Tobias whole. Unlike what here thou seest,  
 The judgment of Timæus,<sup>1</sup> who affirms  
 Each soul restored to its particular star ;  
 Believing it to have been taken thence,  
 When nature gave it to inform her mold :  
 Yet to appearance his intention is  
 Not what his words declare : and so to shun  
 Derision, haply thus he hath disguised  
 His true opinion.<sup>2</sup> If his meaning be,  
 That to the influencing of these orbs revert  
 The honour and the blame in human acts,  
 Perchance he doth not wholly miss the truth.  
 This principle, not understood aright,  
 Erewhile perverted well nigh all the world ;  
 So that it fell to fabled names of Jove,  
 And Mercury, and Mars. That other doubt,  
 Which moves thee, is less harmful ; for it brings  
 No peril of removing thee from me.

“ That, to the eye of man,<sup>3</sup> our justice seems  
 Unjust, is argument for faith, and not  
 For heretic declension. But, to the end  
 This truth<sup>4</sup> may stand more clearly in your view,  
 I will content thee even to thy wish.

“ If violence be, when that which suffers, nought

<sup>1</sup> *Timæus*.] In the *Convito*, p. 92, our author again refers to the Timæus of Plato, on the subject of the mundane system ; but it is in order to give the preference to the opinion respecting it held by Aristotle.

<sup>2</sup> *His true opinion*.] In like manner, the learned Stillington professed himself “ somewhat inclinable to think that Plato knew more of the lapse of mankind than he would openly discover, and for that end disguised it after his usual manner in that hypothesis of pre-existence.” Origines Sacre, b. iii. c. iii. § 15.

<sup>3</sup> *That, to the eye of man*.] “ That the ways of divine justice are often inscrutable to man, ought rather to be a motive to faith than an inducement to heresy.” Such appears to me the most satisfactory explanation of the passage.

<sup>4</sup> *This truth*.] That it is no impeachment of God’s justice, if merit be lessened through compulsion of others, without any failure of good intention on the part of the meritorious. After all, Beatrice ends by admitting that there was a defect in the will, which hindered Constance and the others from seizing the first opportunity, that offered itself to them, of returning to the monastic life.

Consents to that which forceth, not for this  
 These spirits stood exculpate. For the will,  
 That wills not, still survives unquench'd, and doth,  
 As nature doth in fire, though violence  
 Wrest it a thousand times ; for, if it yield  
 Or more or less, so far it follows force.  
 And thus did these, when they had power to seek  
 The hallow'd place again. In them, had will  
 Been perfect, such as once upon the bars  
 Held Laurence <sup>1</sup> firm, or wrought in Scævola <sup>2</sup>  
 To his own hand remorseless ; to the path,  
 Whence they were drawn, their steps had hasten'd  
 back,

When liberty return'd : but in too few,  
 Resolve, so stedfast, dwells. And by these words,  
 If duly weigh'd, that argument is void,  
 Which oft might have perplex'd thee still. But now  
 Another question thwarts thee, which, to solve,  
 Might try thy patience without better aid.  
 I have, no doubt, instill'd into thy mind,  
 That blessed spirit may not lie ; since near  
 The source of primal truth it dwells for aye :  
 And thou mightst after of Piccarda learn  
 That Constance held affection to the veil ;  
 So that she seems to contradict me here.  
 Not seldom, brother, it hath chanced for men  
 To do what they had gladly left undone ;  
 Yet, to shun peril, they have done amiss :  
 E'en as Alcmæon,<sup>3</sup> at his father's <sup>4</sup> suit  
 Slew his own mother ; <sup>5</sup> so made pitiless,  
 Not to lose pity. On this point bethink thee,  
 That force and will are blended in such wise  
 As not to make the offence excusable.  
 Absolute will agrees not to the wrong ;  
 But inasmuch as there is fear of woe

<sup>1</sup> *Laurence.*] Who suffered martyrdom in the third century.

<sup>2</sup> *Scævola.*] See Liv. Hist. D. i. lib. ii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Alcmæon.*] Ovid, Metam. lib. ix. f. 10.

— Ultusque parente parentem  
 Natus, erit facto pius et sceleratus eodem.

<sup>4</sup> *His father's.*] Amphiaraus. <sup>5</sup> *His own mother.*] Eriphyle.

From non-compliance, it agrees. Of will <sup>1</sup>  
 Thus absolute, Piccarda spake, and I  
 Of the other ; so that both have truly said."

Such was the flow of that pure rill, that well'd  
 From forth the fountain of all truth ; and such  
 The rest, that to my wandering thoughts I found.

" O thou, of primal love the prime delight,  
 Goddess ! " I straight replied, " whose lively words  
 Still shed new heat and vigour through my soul ;  
 Affection fails me to requite thy grace  
 With equal sum of gratitude : be His  
 To recompense, who sees and can reward thee.  
 Well I discern, that by that truth <sup>2</sup> alone  
 Enlighten'd, beyond which no truth may roam,  
 Our mind can satisfy her thirst to know :  
 Therein she resteth, e'en as in his lair  
 The wild beast, soon as she hath reach'd that bound.  
 And she hath power to reach it ; else desire  
 Were given to no end. And thence doth doubt  
 Spring, like a shoot, around the stock of truth ;  
 And it is nature which, from height to height,  
 On to the summit prompts us. This invites,  
 This doth assure me, Lady ! reverently  
 To ask thee of another truth, that yet  
 Is dark to me. I fain would know, if man  
 By other works well done may so supply  
 The failure of his vows, that in your scale  
 They lack not weight." I spake ; and on me straight  
 Beatrice look'd, with eyes that shot forth sparks  
 Of love celestial, in such copious stream,  
 That, virtue sinking in me overpower'd,  
 I turn'd ; and downward bent, confused, my sight.

<sup>1</sup> *Of will.*] "What Piccarda asserts of Constance, that she retained her affection to the monastic life, is said absolutely and without relation to circumstances ; and that, which I affirm, is spoken of the will conditionally and respectively, so that our apparent difference is without any disagreement." <sup>2</sup> *That truth.*] The light of divine truth.

## CANTO V

## ARGUMENT

The question proposed in the last Canto is answered. Dante ascends with Beatrice to the planet Mercury, which is the second heaven ; and here he finds a multitude of spirits, one of whom offers to satisfy him of anything he may desire to know from them.

“ If beyond earthly wont,<sup>1</sup> the flame of love  
 Illume me, so that I o’ercome thy power  
 Of vision, marvel not : but learn the cause  
 In that perfection of the sight, which, soon  
 As apprehending, hasteneth on to reach  
 The good it apprehends. I well discern,  
 How in thine intellect already shines  
 The light eternal, which to view alone  
 Ne’er fails to kindle love ; and if aught else  
 Your love seduces, ’tis but that it shows  
 Some ill-mark’d vestige of that primal beam.

“ This wouldst thou know : if failure of the vow  
 By other service may be so supplied,  
 As from self-question to assure the soul.”

Thus she her words, not heedless of my wish,  
 Began ; and thus, as one who breaks not off  
 Discourse, continued in her saintly strain.

“ Supreme of gifts, which God, creating, gave  
 Of His free bounty, sign most evident  
 Of goodness, and in His account most prized,  
 Was liberty of will ; the boon, wherewith  
 All intellectual creatures, and them sole,  
 He hath endow’d. Hence now thou mayst infer  
 Of what high worth the vow, which so is framed  
 That when man offers, God well-pleased accepts :  
 For in the compact between God and him,  
 This treasure, such as I describe it to thee,

<sup>1</sup> *If beyond earthly wont.*] Dante having been unable to sustain the splendour of Beatrice, as we have seen at the end of the last Canto, she tells him to attribute her increase of brightness to the place in which they were.

He makes the victim ; and of his own act.  
 What compensation therefore may he find ?  
 If that, whereof thou hast oblation made,  
 By using well thou think'st to consecrate,  
 Thou wouldst of theft <sup>1</sup> do charitable deed.  
 Thus I resolve thee of the greater point.

“ But forasmuch as holy church, herein  
 Dispensing, seems to contradict the truth  
 I have discover'd to thee, yet behoves  
 Thou rest a little longer at the board,  
 Ere the crude aliment which thou hast ta'en,  
 Digested fitly, to nutrition turn.  
 Open thy mind to what I now unfold ;  
 And give it inward keeping. Knowledge comes  
 Of learning well retain'd, unfruitful else.

“ This sacrifice, in essence, of two things <sup>2</sup>  
 Consisteth ; one is that, whereof 'tis made ;  
 The covenant, the other. For the last,  
 It ne'er is cancel'd, if not kept : and hence  
 I spake, erewhile, so strictly of its force.  
 For this it was enjoin'd the Israelites,<sup>3</sup>  
 Though leave were given them, as thou know'st, to  
 change

The offering, still to offer. The other part,  
 The matter and the substance of the vow,  
 May well be such, as that, without offence,  
 It may for other substance be exchanged.  
 But, at his own discretion, none may shift  
 The burden on his shoulders ; unreleased  
 By either key,<sup>4</sup> the yellow and the white.  
 Nor deem of any change, as less than vain,  
 If the last bond,<sup>5</sup> be not within the new  
 Included, as the quatre in the six.  
 No satisfaction therefore can be paid

<sup>1</sup> *Thou wouldst of theft.*] “ Licet fur de furto, &c.” De Monarchiâ, lib. ii. p. 123. “ Although a thief should out of that which he has stolen give help to a poor man, yet is that not to be called almsgiving.”

<sup>2</sup> *Two things.*] The one, the substance of the vow, as of a single life for instance, or of keeping fast ; the other, the compact, or form of it.

<sup>3</sup> *It was enjoin'd the Israelites.*] See Lev. c. xii. and xxvii. <sup>4</sup> *Either key.*] Purgatorio, Canto ix. 108. <sup>5</sup> *If the last bond.*] If the thing substituted be not far more precious than that which is released.

For what so precious in the balance weighs,  
 That all in counterpoise must kick the beam.  
 Take then no vow at random : ta'en, with faith  
 Preserve it ; yet not bent, as Jephthah once,  
 Blindly to execute a rash resolve,  
 Whom better it had suited to exclaim,  
 ' I have done ill,' than to redeem his pledge  
 By doing worse : or, not unlike to him  
 In folly, that great leader of the Greeks ;  
 Whence, on the altar, Iphigenia mourn'd  
 Her virgin beauty, and hath since made mourn  
 Both wise and simple, even all, who hear  
 Of so fell sacrifice. Be ye more staid,  
 O Christians ! not, like feather, by each wind  
 Removeable ; nor think to cleanse yourselves  
 In every water. Either testament,  
 The old and new, is yours : and for your guide,  
 The shepherd of the church. Let this suffice  
 To save you. When by evil lust enticed,  
 Remember ye be men, not senseless beasts ;  
 Nor let the Jew, who dwelleth in your streets,  
 Hold you in mockery. Be not, as the lamb,  
 That, fickle wanton, leaves its mother's milk,  
 To dally with itself in idle play."

Such were the words that Beatrice spake :  
 These ended, to that region,<sup>1</sup> where the world  
 Is liveliest, full of fond desire she turn'd.

Though mainly prompt new question to propose,  
 Her silence and changed look did keep me dumb.  
 And as the arrow, ere the cord is still,  
 Leapeth unto its mark ; so on we sped  
 Into the second realm. There I beheld  
 The dame, so joyous, enter, that the orb  
 Grew brighter at her smiles ; and, if the star

<sup>1</sup> *That region.*] As some explain it, the east : according to others, the equinoctial line. Lombardi supposes it to mean that she looked upwards. Monti, in his *Proposta* (vol. iii. p.<sup>te</sup> 2, p. lxxix. Milan, 1826), has adduced a passage from our author's *Convito*, which fixes the sense. Dico ancora, che quanto il Cielo è più presso al cerchio equatore, tanto è più mobile per comparazione alli suoi ; perocchè ha più movimento, è più attualità, e più vita, e più forma, e più tocca di quello, che è sopra se, e per conseguente più virtuoso, p. 48.



Were moved to gladness, what then was my cheer,  
Whom nature hath made apt for every change !

As in a quiet and clear lake the fish,  
If aught approach them from without, do draw  
Towards it, deeming it their food ; so drew  
Full more than thousand splendours towards us ;  
And in each one was heard : “ Lo ! one arrived  
To multiply our loves ! ” and as each came,  
The shadow, streaming forth effulgence new,  
Witness'd augmented joy. Here, Reader ! think,  
If thou didst miss the sequel of my tale,  
To know the rest how sorely thou wouldst crave ;  
And thou shalt see what vehement desire  
Possess'd me, soon as these had met my view,  
To know their state. “ O born in happy hour !  
Thou, to whom grace vouchsafes, or e'er thy close  
Of fleshly warfare, to behold the thrones  
Of that eternal triumph ; know, to us  
The light communicated, which through heaven  
Expatriates without bound. Therefore, if aught  
Thou of our beams wouldst borrow for thine aid,  
Spare not ; and, of our radiance, take thy fill.”

Thus of those piteous spirits one bespake me ;  
And Beatrice next : “ Say on ; and trust  
As unto gods.”—“ How in the light supreme  
Thou harbour'st, and from thence the virtue bring'st,  
That, sparkling in thine eyes, denotes thy joy,  
I mark ; but, who thou art, am still to seek ;  
Or wherefore, worthy spirit ! for thy lot  
This sphere <sup>1</sup> assign'd, that oft from mortal ken  
Is veil'd by other's beams.” I said ; and turn'd  
Toward the lustre, that with greeting kind  
Erewhile had hail'd me. Forthwith, brighter far  
Than erst, it wax'd : and, as himself the sun  
Hides through excess of light, when his warm gaze <sup>2</sup>  
Hath on the mantle of thick vapours prey'd ;  
Within its proper ray the saintly shape

<sup>1</sup> *This sphere.*] The planet Mercury, which, being nearest to the sun, is oftenest hidden by that luminary. <sup>2</sup> *When his warm gaze.*] When the sun has dried up the vapours, that shaded his brightness.

Was, through increase of gladness, thus conceal'd ;  
 And, shrouded so in splendour, answer'd me,  
 E'en as the tenour of my song declares.

## CANTO VI

## ARGUMENT

The spirit, who had offered to satisfy the inquiries of Dante, declares himself to be the Emperor Justinian ; and after speaking of his own actions, recounts the victories, before him, obtained under the Roman Eagle. He then informs our Poet that the soul of Romeo the pilgrim, is in the same star.

“ AFTER that Constantine the eagle turn'd <sup>1</sup>  
 Against the motions of the heaven, that roll'd  
 Consenting with its course, when he of yore,  
 Lavinia's spouse, was leader of the flight ;  
 A hundred years twice told and more, <sup>2</sup> his seat  
 At Europe's extreme point, <sup>3</sup> the bird of Jove  
 Held, near the mountains, whence he issued first ;  
 There under shadow of his sacred plumes  
 Swaying the world, till through successive hands  
 To mine he came devolved. Cæsar I was ;  
 And am Justinian ; destined by the will  
 Of that prime love, whose influence I feel,  
 From vain excess to clear the incumber'd laws. <sup>4</sup>  
 Or e'er that work engaged me, I did hold  
 In Christ one nature only ; <sup>5</sup> with such faith

<sup>1</sup> *After that Constantine the eagle turn'd.*] Constantine, in transferring the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, carried the eagle, the Imperial ensign, from the west to the east. Æneas, on the contrary, had, with better augury, moved along with the sun's course, when he passed from Troy to Italy. <sup>2</sup> *A hundred years twice told and more.*]

The Emperor Constantine entered Byzantium in 324 ; and Justinian began his reign in 527. <sup>3</sup> *At Europe's extreme point.*] Constantinople being situated at the extreme of Europe, and on the borders of Asia, near those mountains in the neighbourhood of Troy, from whence the first founders of Rome had emigrated. <sup>4</sup> *To clear the incumber'd laws.*]

The code of laws was abridged and reformed by Justinian. <sup>5</sup> *In Christ one nature only.*] Justinian is said to have been a follower of the heretical opinions held by Eutyches, “ who taught that in Christ there was but one nature, viz., that of the incarnate word.” Maclaine's Mosheim, t. ii. cent. v. p. ii. cap. v. § 13.

Contented. But the blessed Agapete,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who was chief shepherd, he with warning voice  
 To the true faith recall'd me. I believed  
 His words : and what he taught, now plainly see,  
 As thou in every contradiction seest  
 The true and false opposed. Soon as my feet  
 Were to the church reclaim'd, to my great task,  
 By inspiration of God's grace impell'd,  
 I gave me wholly ; and consign'd mine arms  
 To Belisarius, with whom heaven's right hand  
 Was link'd in such conjointment, 'twas a sign  
 That I should rest. To thy first question thus  
 I shape mine answer, which were ended here,  
 But that its tendency doth prompt perforce  
 To some addition ; that thou well mayst mark,  
 What reason on each side they have to plead,  
 By whom that holiest banner is withstood,  
 Both who pretend its power<sup>2</sup> and who oppose.<sup>3</sup>

" Beginning from that hour, when Pallas died<sup>4</sup>  
 To give it rule, behold the valorous deeds  
 Have made it worthy reverence. Not unknown<sup>5</sup>  
 To thee, how for three hundred years and more  
 It dwelt in Alba, up to those fell lists  
 Where, for its sake, were met the rival three ;<sup>6</sup>  
 Nor aught unknown to thee, which it achieved  
 Down<sup>7</sup> from the Sabines' wrong to Lucrece' woe ;  
 With its seven kings conquering the nations round ;

<sup>1</sup> *Agapete.*] "Agapetus, Bishop of Rome, whose *Scheda Regia*, addressed to the Emperor Justinian, procured him a place among the wisest and most judicious writers of this century." Maclaine's *Mosheim*, cent. vi. p. ii. cap. ii. § 8. <sup>2</sup> *Who pretend its power.*] The Ghibellines.

<sup>3</sup> *And who oppose.*] The Guelphs. <sup>4</sup> *Pallas died.*] See Virgil, *Æn.* lib. x. <sup>5</sup> *Not unknown.*] In the second book of his treatise *De Monarchiâ*,

where Dante endeavours to prove that the Roman people had a right to govern the world, he refers to their conquests and successes in nearly the same order as in this passage. "The Roman," he affirms, "might truly say, as the Apostle did to Timothy, 'There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness' ; laid up, that is, in the eternal providence of God," p. 131. And again : "Now it is manifest, that by *duel* (*per duellum*) the Roman people acquired the Empire ; therefore they acquired it by right, to prove which is the main purpose of the present book," p. 132. <sup>6</sup> *The rival three.*] The Horatii and Curiatii.

<sup>7</sup> *Down.*] "From the rape of the Sabine women to the violation of Lucretia."

Nor all it wrought, by Roman worthies borne  
 'Gainst Brennus and the Epirot prince,<sup>1</sup> and hosts  
 Of single chiefs, or states in league combined  
 Of social warfare : hence, Torquatus stern,  
 And Quintius<sup>2</sup> named of his neglected locks.  
 The Decii, and the Fabii hence acquired  
 Their fame, which I with duteous zeal embalm.  
 By it the pride of Arab hordes<sup>3</sup> was quell'd,  
 When they, led on by Hannibal, o'erpass'd  
 The Alpine rocks, whence glide thy currents, Po !  
 Beneath its guidance, in their prime of days  
 Scipio and Pompey triumph'd ; and that hill<sup>4</sup>  
 Under whose summit<sup>5</sup> thou didst see the light,  
 Rued its stern bearing. After, near the hour,<sup>6</sup>  
 When heaven was minded that o'er all the world  
 His own deep calm should brood, to Cæsar's hand  
 Did Rome consign it ; and what then it wrought<sup>7</sup>  
 From Var unto the Rhine, saw Isere's flood,

<sup>1</sup> *The Epirot prince.*] King Pyrrhus. <sup>2</sup> *Quintius.*] Quintus Cincinnatus. Compare *De Monarchiâ*, lib. ii. p. 121, &c. "Itaque, inquit, et majores nostri, &c." <sup>3</sup> *Arab hordes.*] The Arabians seem to be put for the barbarians in general. Lombardi's comment is, that as the Arabs are an Asiatic people, and it is not recorded that Hannibal had any other troops except his own countrymen the Carthaginians, who were Africans, we must understand that Dante denominates that people, Arabs, on account of their origin. "Ab Ifrico Arabiæ Felicis rege, qui omnium primus hanc terram (Africam) incoluisse fertur," &c. Leo Africanus, *Africæ Descriptio*, lib. i. cap. i. <sup>4</sup> *That hill.*] The city of Fesulæ, which was sacked by the Romans after the defeat of Catiline. <sup>5</sup> *Under whose summit.*] "At the foot of which is situated Florence, thy birthplace." <sup>6</sup> *Near the hour.*] Near the time of our Saviour's birth. "The immeasurable goodness of the Deity being willing again to conform to itself the human creature, which by transgression of the first man had from God departed, and fallen from His likeness, it was determined in that most high and closest consistory of the Godhead, the Trinity, that the Son of God should descend upon earth to make this agreement. And because it was behoveful, that at His coming, the world, not only the heaven but the earth, should be in the best possible disposition : and the best disposition of the earth is, when it is a monarchy, that is, all under one prince, as hath been said above ; therefore through the divine forecast was ordained that people and that city for the accomplishment, namely, the glorious Rome." Convito, p. 138. The same argument is repeated at the conclusion of the first book of our author's treatise, *De Monarchiâ*. <sup>7</sup> *What then it wrought.*] In the following fifteen lines the Poet has comprised the exploits of Julius Cæsar, for which, and for the allusions in the greater part of this speech of Justinian's, I must refer my reader to the history of Rome.

Saw Loire and Seine, and every vale, that fills  
 The torrent Rhone. What after that it wrought,  
 When from Ravenna it came forth, and leap'd  
 The Rubicon, was of so bold a flight,  
 That tongue nor pen may follow it. Towards Spain  
 It wheel'd its bands, then toward Dyrrachium smote,  
 And on Pharsalia, with so fierce a plunge,  
 E'en the warm Nile was conscious to the pang ;  
 Its native shores Antandros, and the streams  
 Of Simois revisited, and there  
 Where Hector lies ; then ill for Ptolemy  
 His pennons shook again ; lightening thence fell  
 On Juba ; and the next, upon your west,  
 At sound of the Pompeian trump, return'd.

“ What following, and in its next bearer's gripe,<sup>1</sup>  
 It wrought, is now by Cassius and Brutus  
 Bark'd of <sup>2</sup> in hell ; and by Perugia's sons,  
 And Modena's, was mourn'd. Hence weepeth still  
 Sad Cleopatra, who, pursued by it,  
 Took from the adder black and sudden death.  
 With him it ran e'en to the Red Sea coast ;  
 With him composed the world to such a peace,  
 That of his temple Janus barr'd the door.

“ But all the mighty standard yet had wrought,  
 And was appointed to perform thereafter,  
 Throughout the mortal kingdom which it sway'd,  
 Falls in appearance dwindled and obscured,  
 If one with steady eye and perfect thought  
 On the third Cæsar <sup>3</sup> look ; for to his hands,  
 The living Justice, in whose breath I move,  
 Committed glory, e'en into his hands,  
 To execute the vengeance of its wrath.

“ Hear now, and wonder at, what next I tell.  
 After with Titus it was sent to wreak

<sup>1</sup> *In its next bearer's gripe.*] With Augustus Cæsar.

<sup>2</sup> *Bark'd of.*] τοιαῦθ' ἔλασται. Sophocles, Electra, 299.

<sup>3</sup> *The third Cæsar.*] The eagle in the hand of Tiberius, the third of the Cæsars, outdid all its achievements, both past and future, by becoming the instrument of that mighty and mysterious act of satisfaction made to the divine justice in the crucifixion of our Lord. This is Lombardi's explanation.

Vengeance for vengeance <sup>1</sup> of the ancient sin.  
 And, when the Lombard tooth, with fang impure,  
 Did gore the bosom of the holy church,  
 Under its wings, victorious Charlemain <sup>2</sup>  
 Sped to her rescue. Judge then for thyself  
 Of those, whom I erewhile accused to thee,  
 What they are, and how grievous their offending,  
 Who are the cause of all your ills. The one <sup>3</sup>  
 Against the universal ensign rears  
 The yellow lilies; <sup>4</sup> and with partial aim,  
 That, to himself, the other <sup>5</sup> arrogates:  
 So that 'tis hard to see who most offends.  
 Be yours, ye Ghibellines, to veil your hearts  
 Beneath another standard: ill is this  
 Follow'd of him, who severs it and justice:  
 And let not with his Guelphs the new-crown'd Charles <sup>6</sup>  
 Assail it; but those talons hold in dread,  
 Which from a lion of more lofty port  
 Have rent the casing. Many a time ere now  
 The sons have for the sire's transgression wail'd:  
 Nor let him trust the fond belief, that heaven  
 Will truck its armour for his liliated shield.

"This little star is furnish'd with good spirits,  
 Whose mortal lives were busied to that end,  
 That honour and renown might wait on them:  
 And, when desires <sup>7</sup> thus err in their intention,  
 True love must needs ascend with slacker beam.  
 But it is part of our delight, to measure  
 Our wages with the merit; and admire

<sup>1</sup> *Vengeance for vengeance.*] This will be afterwards explained by the Poet himself. See next Canto, v. 47, and note. <sup>2</sup> *Charlemain.*] Dante could not be ignorant that the reign of Justinian was long prior to that of Charlemagne; but the spirit of the former emperor is represented, both in this instance and in what follows, as conscious of the events that had taken place after his own time. <sup>3</sup> *The one.*] The Guelph party. <sup>4</sup> *The yellow lilies.*] The French ensign. <sup>5</sup> *The other.*] The Ghibelline party. <sup>6</sup> *Charles.*] The commentators explain this to mean Charles II., King of Naples and Sicily. Is it not more likely to allude to Charles of Valois, son of Philip III. of France, who was sent for, about this time, into Italy by Pope Boniface, with the promise of being made emperor? See G. Villani, lib. viii. cap. xlii. <sup>7</sup> *When desires.*] When honour and fame are the chief motives to action, that love, which has heaven for its object, must necessarily become less fervent. ¶



The close proportion. Hence doth heavenly justice  
 Temper so evenly affection in us,  
 It ne'er can warp to any wrongfulness.  
 Of diverse voices is sweet music made :  
 So in our life the different degrees  
 Render sweet harmony among these wheels.

“ Within the pearl, that now encloseth us,  
 Shines Romeo's light,<sup>1</sup> whose goodly deed and fair  
 Met ill acceptance. But the Provençals,  
 That were his foes, have little cause for mirth.  
 Ill shapes that man his course, who makes his wrong  
 Of other's worth. Four daughters<sup>2</sup> were there  
 born

To Raymond Berenger ;<sup>3</sup> and every one  
 Became a queen : and this for him did Romeo,

<sup>1</sup> *Romeo's light.*] The story of Romeo is involved in some uncertainty. The name of Romeo signified, as we have seen in the note, Purg. Canto xxxiii. v. 78, one who went on a pilgrimage to Rome. The French writers assert the continuance of his ministerial office even after the decease of his sovereign, Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence : and they rest this assertion chiefly on the fact of a certain Romieu de Villeneuve, who was the contemporary of that prince, having left large possessions behind him, as appears by his will preserved in the archives of the bishopric of Vence. That they are right as to the name at least, would appear from the following marginal note on the Monte Cassino MS. Romeo de Villanova districtus civitatis Ventiae de Provincia olim administratoris Raymundi Belingerj Comitiss de Provincia—ivit peregrinando contemplatione ad Deum. Yet it is improbable, on the other hand, that the Italians, who lived so near the time, should be misinformed in an occurrence of such notoriety. According to them, after he had long been a faithful steward to Raymond, when an account was required from him of the revenues which he had carefully husbanded, and his master as lavishly disbursed, “ he demanded the little mule, the staff, and the scrip, with which he had first entered into the Count's service, a stranger pilgrim from the shrine of St. James, in Galicia, and parted as he came ; nor was it ever known whence he was, or whither he went.” G. Villani, lib. vi. c. xcii. The same incidents are told of him at the conclusion of cap. xxviii. lib. ii. of Fazio degli Uberti's Dittamondo. <sup>2</sup> *Four daughters.*] Of the four daughters of Raymond Berenger, Margaret, the eldest, was married to Louis ix. of France ; Eleanor, the next, to Henry iii. of England ; Sancha, the third, to Richard, Henry's brother, and King of the Romans ; and the youngest, Beatrix, to Charles i., King of Naples and Sicily, and brother to Louis. <sup>3</sup> *Raymond Berenger.*] This prince, the last of the house of Barcelona, who was Count of Provence, died in 1245. He is in the list of Provençal poets. See Millot, Hist. des Troubadours, tom. ii. p. 212. But M. Raynouard could find no manuscript of his works. See Choix des Poésies des Troubadours, tom. v. p. vii.

Though of mean state and from a foreign land.  
 Yet envious tongues incited him to ask  
 A reckoning of that just one, who return'd  
 Twelfefold to him for ten. Aged and poor  
 He parted thence : and if the world did know  
 The heart he had, begging his life by morsels,  
 'Twould deem the praise, it yields him, scantily dealt."

6-13-1931

## CANTO VII

### ARGUMENT

In consequence of what had been said by Justinian, who together with the other spirits have now disappeared, some doubts arise in the mind of Dante respecting the human redemption. These difficulties are fully explained by Beatrice.

"HOSANNA <sup>1</sup> Sanctus Deus Sabaoth,  
 Superillustrans claritate tuâ  
 Felices ignes horum malahoth."

Thus chanting saw I turn that substance bright,<sup>2</sup>  
 With fourfold lustre to its orb again,  
 Revolving ; and the rest, unto their dance,  
 With it, moved also ; and, like swiftest sparks,  
 In sudden distance from my sight were veil'd.

Me doubt possess'd ; and "Speak," it whisper'd  
 me,

"Speak, speak unto thy lady ; that she quench  
 Thy thirst with drops of sweetness." Yet blank  
 awe,

Which lords it o'er me, even at the sound  
 Of Beatrice's name, did bow me down  
 As one in slumber held. Not long that mood  
 Beatrice suffer'd : she, with such a smile,  
 As might have made one blest amid the flames,  
 Beaming upon me, thus her words began :

<sup>1</sup> *Hosanna.*] "Hosanna holy God of Sabaoth, abundantly illuminating with thy brightness the blessed fires of these kingdoms." <sup>2</sup> *That substance bright.*] Justinian.

“Thou in thy thought art pondering (as I deem,  
And what I deem is truth) how just revenge  
Could be with justice punish’d: from which doubt  
I soon will free thee; so thou mark my words;  
For they of weighty matter shall possess thee.  
Through suffering not a curb upon the power  
That will’d in him, to his own profiting,  
That man, who was unborn,<sup>1</sup> condemn’d himself;  
And, in himself, all, who since him have lived,  
His offspring: whence, below, the human kind  
Lay sick in grievous error many an age;  
Until it pleased the Word of God to come  
Amongst them down, to His own person joining  
The nature from its Maker far estranged,  
By the mere act of His eternal love.  
Contemplate here the wonder I unfold.  
The nature with its Maker thus conjoin’d,  
Created first was blameless, pure and good;  
But, through itself alone, was driven forth  
From Paradise, because it had eschew’d  
The way of truth and life, to evil turn’d.  
Ne’er then was penalty so just as that  
Inflicted by the cross, if thou regard  
The nature in assumption doom’d; ne’er wrong  
So great, in reference to Him, who took  
Such nature on Him, and endured the doom.  
So different effects <sup>2</sup> flow’d from one act:  
For by one death God and the Jews were pleased;  
And heaven was open’d, though the earth did quake.  
Count it not hard henceforth, when thou dost hear  
That a just vengeance <sup>3</sup> was, by righteous court,  
Justly revenged. But yet I see thy mind,  
By thought on thought arising, sore perplex’d;

<sup>1</sup> *That man, who was unborn.*] Adam. <sup>2</sup> *Different effects.*] The death of Christ was pleasing to God, inasmuch as it satisfied the divine justice; and to the Jews, because it gratified their malignity: and while heaven opened for joy at the ransom of man, the earth trembled through compassion for its Maker. <sup>3</sup> *A just vengeance.*] The punishment of Christ by the Jews, although just as far as regarded the human nature assumed by Him, and so a righteous vengeance of sin, yet being unjust as it regarded the divine nature, was itself justly revenged on the Jews by the destruction of Jerusalem.

And, with how vehement desire, it asks  
Solution of the maze. What I have heard,  
Is plain, thou say'st : but wherefore God this way  
For our redemption chose, eludes my search.

“ Brother ! no eye of man not perfected,  
Nor fully ripen'd in the flame of love,  
May fathom this decree. It is a mark,  
In sooth, much aim'd at, and but little kenn'd :  
And I will therefore show thee why such way  
Was worthiest. The celestial love,<sup>1</sup> that spurns  
All envying in its bounty, in itself  
With such effulgence blazeth, as sends forth  
All beauteous things eternal. What distils<sup>2</sup>  
Immediate thence, no end of being knows ;  
Bearing its seal immutably imprest.  
Whatever thence immediate falls, is free,  
Free wholly, uncontrollable by power  
Of each thing new : by such conformity  
More grateful to its author, whose bright beams,  
Though all partake their shining, yet in those  
Are liveliest, which resemble Him the most.  
These tokens of pre-eminence<sup>3</sup> on man  
Largely bestow'd, if any of them fail,  
He needs must forfeit his nobility,  
No longer stainless. Sin alone is that,  
Which doth disfranchise him, and make unlike  
To the chief good ; for that its light in him  
Is darken'd. And to dignity thus lost  
Is no return ; unless, where guilt makes void,  
He for ill pleasure pay with equal pain.

<sup>1</sup> *The celestial love.*] From Boëtius de Consol. Philos. lib. iii. Metr. 9.  
Quem non externæ pepulerunt fingere causæ  
Materiæ fluitantis opus, verum insita summi  
Forma boni livore carens ; tu cuncta superno  
Ducis ab exemplo, pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse  
Mundum mente gerens, similique in imagine formans,  
Perfectasque jubens perfectum absolvere partes.

<sup>2</sup> *What distils.*] “ That, which proceeds immediately from God,  
and without the intervention of secondary causes, is immortal.”

<sup>3</sup> *These tokens of pre-eminence.*] The before-mentioned gifts of  
immediate creation by God, independence on secondary causes, and  
consequent similitude and agreeableness to the divine Being, at all  
first conferred on man.

Your nature, which entirely in its seed  
Transgress'd, from these distinctions fell, no less  
Than from its state in Paradise ; nor means  
Found of recovery (search all methods out  
As strictly as thou may) save one of these,  
The only fords were left through which to wade :  
Either, that God had of His courtesy  
Released him merely ; or else, man himself  
For his own folly by himself atoned.

“ Fix now thine eye, intently as thou canst,  
On the everlasting counsel ; and explore,  
Instructed by my words, the dread abyss.

“ Man in himself had ever lack'd the means  
Of satisfaction, for he could not stoop  
Obeying, in humility so low,  
As high, he, disobeying, thought to soar :  
And, for this reason, he had vainly tried,  
Out of his own sufficiency, to pay  
The rigid satisfaction. Then behoved  
That God should by His own ways lead him back  
Unto the life, from whence he fell, restored :  
By both his ways, I mean, or one alone.<sup>1</sup>  
But since the deed is ever prized the more,  
The more the doer's good intent appears ;  
Goodness celestial, whose broad signature  
Is on the universe, of all its ways  
To raise ye up, was fain to leave out none.  
Nor aught so vast or so magnificent,  
Either for him who gave or who received,  
Between the last night and the primal day,  
Was or can be. For God more bounty show'd,  
Giving Himself to make man capable  
Of his return to life, than had the terms  
Been mere and unconditional release.  
And for His justice, every method else  
Were all too scant, had not the Son of God  
Humbled Himself to put on mortal flesh.

“ Now, to content thee fully, I revert ;

<sup>1</sup> *By both his ways, I mean. or one alone.]* Either by mercy and justice united; or by mercy alone.

And further in some part <sup>1</sup> unfold my speech,  
That thou mayest see it clearly as myself.

“ I see, thou sayst, the air, the fire I see,  
The earth and water, and all things of them  
Compounded, to corruption turn, and soon  
Dissolve. Yet these were also things create,  
Because, if what were told me, had been true,  
They from corruption had been therefore free.

“ The angels, O my brother ! and this clime  
Wherein thou art, impassible and pure,  
I call created, even as they are  
In their whole being. But the elements,  
Which thou hast named, and what of them is made,  
Are by created virtue inform'd : create,  
Their substance ; and create, the informing virtue  
In these bright stars, that round them circling move.  
The soul of every brute and of each plant,  
The ray and motion of the sacred lights,  
Draw from complexion with meet power endued.  
But this our life the eternal good inspires  
Immediate, and enamours of itself ;  
So that our wishes rest for ever here.

“ And hence thou mayst by inference conclude  
Our resurrection certain,<sup>2</sup> if thy mind  
Consider how the human flesh was framed,  
When both our parents at the first were made.”

<sup>1</sup> *In some part.*] She reverts to that part of her discourse where she had said that what proceeds immediately from God “no end of being knows.” She then proceeds to tell him that the elements, which, though he knew them to be created, yet he saw dissolved, received their form not immediately from God, but from a virtue or power created by God ; that the soul of brutes and plants is in like manner drawn forth by the stars with a combination of those elements meetly tempered, “di compassione potenziata” ; but that the angels and the heavens may be said to be created in that very manner in which they exist, without any intervention of agency.  
<sup>2</sup> *Our resurrection certain.*] Venturi appears to mistake the Poet’s reasoning, when he observes: “Wretched for us, if we had not arguments more convincing, and of a higher kind, to assure us of the truth of our resurrection.” It is, perhaps, here intended that the whole of God’s dispensation should be taken into the account. The conclusion may be, that as before sin man was immortal, and even in flesh proceeded immediately from God, so being restored to the favour of heaven by the expiation made for sin, he necessarily recovers his claim to immortality even in the body.



## CANTO VIII

## ARGUMENT

The Poet ascends with Beatrice to the third heaven, which is the planet Venus; and here finds the soul of Charles Martel, King of Hungary, who had been Dante's friend on earth, and who now, after speaking of the realms to which he was heir, unfolds the cause why children differ in disposition from their parents.

THE world <sup>1</sup> was, in its day of peril dark,  
 Wont to believe the dotage of fond love,  
 From the fair Cyprian deity, who rolls  
 In her third epicycle,<sup>2</sup> shed on men  
 By stream of potent radiance: therefore they  
 Of elder time, in their old error blind,  
 Not her alone with sacrifice adored  
 And invocation, but like honours paid  
 To Cupid and Dione, deem'd of them  
 Her mother, and her son, him whom they feign'd  
 To sit in Dido's bosom: <sup>3</sup> and from her,  
 Whom I have sung preluding, borrow'd they  
 The appellation of that star, which views  
 Now obvious,<sup>4</sup> and now averse, the sun.

I was not ware that I was wafted up  
 Into its orb; but the new loveliness,  
 That graced my lady, gave me ample proof  
 That we had enter'd there. And as in flame  
 A sparkle is distinct, or voice in voice  
 Discern'd, when one its even tenour keeps,  
 The other comes and goes; so in that light  
 I other luminaries saw, that coursed

<sup>1</sup> *The world.*] The Poet, on his arrival at the third heaven, tells us that the world, in its days of heathen darkness, believed the influence of sensual love to proceed from the star, to which, under the name of Venus, they paid divine honours; as they worshipped the supposed mother and son of Venus, under the names of Dione and Cupid.

<sup>2</sup> *Epicycle.*] "In sul dosso di questo cerchio," &c. *Convito di Dante*, p. 48. "Upon the back of this circle, in the heaven of Venus, whereof we are now treating, is a little sphere, which has in that heaven a revolution of its own; whose circle the astronomers term epicycle."

<sup>3</sup> *To sit in Dido's bosom.*] Virgil, *Æn.* lib. i. 718. <sup>4</sup> *Now obvious.*] Being at one part of the year, a morning, and at another an evening star.

In circling motion, rapid more or less,  
As their <sup>1</sup> eternal vision each impels.

Never was blast from vapour charged with cold,  
Whether invisible to eye or no,<sup>2</sup>  
Descended with such speed, it had not seem'd  
To linger in dull tardiness, compared  
To those celestial lights, that towards us came,  
Leaving the circuit of their joyous ring,  
Conducted by the lofty seraphim.

And after them, who in the van appear'd,  
Such an Hosanna sounded as hath left  
Desire, ne'er since extinct in me, to hear  
Renew'd the strain. Then, parting from the rest,  
One near us drew, and sole began : " We all  
Are ready at thy pleasure, well disposed  
To do thee gentle service. We are they  
To whom thou in the world erewhile didst sing ;  
' O ye ! whose intellectual ministry <sup>3</sup>  
' Moves the third heaven : ' and in one orb we  
roll,

One motion, one impulse, with those who rule  
Princedom in heaven ; <sup>4</sup> yet are of love so full,  
That to please thee 'twill be as sweet to rest."

After mine eyes had with meek reverence  
Sought the celestial guide, and were by her  
Assured, they turn'd again unto the light,  
Who had so largely promised ; and with voice  
That bare the lively pressure of my zeal,  
" Tell who ye are," I cried. Forthwith it grew  
In size and splendour, through augmented joy ;  
And thus it answer'd : " A short date, below,

<sup>1</sup> *As their.*] As each, according to their several deserts, partakes more or less of the beatific vision. <sup>2</sup> *Whether invisible to the eye or no.*] He calls the blast invisible, if unattended by gross vapour ; otherwise, visible.

<sup>3</sup> *' O ye ! whose intellectual ministry.'*]

Voi ch' intendendo il terzo ciel movete.

The first line in our Poet's first Canzone. See his Convito, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Princedom in heaven.*] See Canto xxviii. 112, where the princedom is, as here, made co-ordinate with this third sphere. In his Convito, p. 54, he has ranked them differently, making the thrones the moving intelligences of Venus.

The world possess'd me. Had the time been more,<sup>1</sup>  
 Much evil, that will come, had never chanced.  
 My gladness hides thee from me, which doth shine  
 Around, and shroud me, as an animal  
 In its own silk enswathed. Thou lovedst me well,<sup>2</sup>  
 And hadst good cause ; for had my sojourning  
 Been longer on the earth, the love I bare thee  
 Had put forth more than blossoms. The left bank,<sup>3</sup>  
 That Rhone, when he hath mix'd with Sorga, laves,  
 In me its lord expected, and that horn  
 Of fair Ausonia,<sup>4</sup> with its boroughs old,  
 Bari, and Croton, and Gaeta piled,  
 From where the Trento disembogues his waves,  
 With Verde mingled, to the salt-sea flood.  
 Already on my temples beam'd the crown,  
 Which gave me sovereignty over the land <sup>5</sup>  
 By Danube wash'd, whenas he strays beyond  
 The limits of his German shores. The realm,  
 Where, on the gulf by stormy Eurys lash'd,  
 Betwixt Pelorus and Pachynian heights,  
 The beautiful Trinacria <sup>6</sup> lies in gloom,  
 (Not through Typhœus,<sup>7</sup> but the vapoury cloud

<sup>1</sup> *Had the time been more.*] The spirit now speaking is Charles Martel, crowned King of Hungary, and son of Charles II., King of Naples and Sicily, to which dominions, dying in his father's lifetime, he did not succeed. The evil, that would have been prevented by the longer life of Charles Martel, was that resistance which his brother Robert, King of Sicily, who succeeded him, made to the Emperor Henry VII. See G. Villani, lib. ix. cap. xxxviii. <sup>2</sup> *Thou lovedst me well.*] Charles Martel might have been known to our Poet at Florence, whither he came to meet his father in 1295, the year of his death. The retinue and the habiliments of the young monarch are minutely described by G. Villani, who adds, that "he remained more than twenty days in Florence, waiting for his father King Charles and his brothers; during which time great honour was done him by the Florentines, and he showed no less love towards them, and he was much in favour with all." Lib. viii. cap. xiii. His brother Robert, King of Naples, was the friend of Petrarch. <sup>3</sup> *The left bank.*] Provence.

<sup>4</sup> ——— *That horn*

*Of fair Ausonia.*] The kingdom of Naples.

<sup>5</sup> *The land.*] Hungary. <sup>6</sup> *The beautiful Trinacria.*] Sicily ; so called from its three promontories, of which Pachynus and Pelorus, here mentioned, are two. <sup>7</sup> *Typhœus.*] The giant, whom Jupiter is fabled to have overwhelmed under the mountain Ætna, from whence he vomited forth smoke and flame.

Bituminous upsteam'd), *that* too did look  
 To have its sceptre wielded by a race  
 Of monarchs, sprung through me from Charles and  
 Rudolph ; <sup>1</sup>

Had not ill-lording, <sup>2</sup> which doth desperate make  
 The people ever, in Palermo raised  
 The shout of ' death,' re-echoed loud and long.  
 Had but my brother's foresight <sup>3</sup> kenn'd as much,  
 He had been warier, that the greedy want  
 Of Catalonia might not work his bale.

And truly need there is that he forecast,  
 Or other for him, lest more freight be laid  
 On his already over-laden bark.  
 Nature in him, from bounty fallen to thrift,  
 Would ask the guard of braver arms, than such  
 As only care to have their coffers fill'd."

" My liege ! it doth enhance the joy thy words  
 Infuse into me, mighty as it is,  
 To think my gladness manifest to thee,  
 As to myself, who own it, when thou look'st  
 Into the source and limit of all good,  
 There, where thou markest that which thou dost  
 speak,

Thence prized of me the more. Glad thou hast made  
 me :

Now make intelligent, clearing the doubt  
 Thy speech hath raised in me ; for much I muse,  
 How bitter can spring up, <sup>4</sup> when sweet is sown."

<sup>1</sup> *Sprung through me from Charles and Rudolph.*] " Sicily would be still ruled by a race of monarchs, descended through me from Charles I. and Rudolph I., the former my grandfather, King of Naples and Sicily; the latter, Emperor of Germany, my father-in-law"; both celebrated in the Purgatorio, Canto vii. <sup>2</sup> *Had not ill-lording.*] " If the ill conduct of our governors in Sicily had not excited the resentment and hatred of the people, and stimulated them to that dreadful massacre at the Sicilian vespers"; in consequence of which the kingdom fell into the hands of Peter III. of Arragon, in 1282. <sup>3</sup> *My brother's foresight.*] He seems to tax his brother Robert with employing necessitous and greedy Catalonians to administer the affairs of his kingdom. <sup>4</sup> *How bitter can spring up.*] " How a covetous son can spring from a liberal father." Yet that father has himself been accused of avarice in the Purgatorio, Canto xx. 78; though his general character was that of a bounteous prince.

I thus inquiring ; he forthwith replied :

“ If I have power to show one truth, soon that  
Shall face thee, which thy questioning declares  
Behind thee now conceal'd. The Good,<sup>1</sup> that guides  
And blessed makes this realm which thou dost mount,  
Ordains its providence to be the virtue  
In these great bodies : nor the natures only  
The all-perfect mind provides for, but with them  
That which preserves them too ; for nought, that lies  
Within the range of that unerring bow,  
But is as level with the destined aim,  
As ever mark to arrow's point opposed.  
Were it not thus, these heavens, thou dost visit,  
Would their effect so work, it would not be  
Art, but destruction ; and this may not chance,  
If the intellectual powers, that move these stars,  
Fail not, and who, first faulty made them, fail.  
Wilt thou this truth more clearly evidenced ? ”

To whom I thus : “ It is enough : no fear  
I see, lest nature in her part should tire.”

He straight rejoin'd : “ Say, were it worse for man,  
If he lived not in fellowship on earth ? ”

“ Yea,” answer'd I ; “ nor here a reason needs.”

“ And may that be, if different estates  
Grow not of different duties in your life ?  
Consult your teacher,<sup>2</sup> and he tells you ‘ no.’ ”

<sup>1</sup> *The Good.*] The Supreme Being uses these spheres as the intelligent instruments of His providence in the conduct of terrestrial natures ; so that these natures cannot but be conducted aright, unless these heavenly bodies should themselves fail from not having been made perfect at first, or the Creator of them should fail. To this Dante replies, that nature, he is satisfied, thus directed must do her part. Charles Martel then reminds him, that he had learned from Aristotle, that human society requires a variety of conditions, and consequently a variety of qualifications in its members. Accordingly, men, he concludes, are born with different powers and capacities, caused by the influence of the heavenly bodies at the time of their nativity ; on which influence, and not on their parents, those powers and capacities depend. Having thus resolved the question proposed, Charles Martel adds, by way of corollary, that the want of observing their natural bent in the destination of men to their several offices in life, is the occasion of much of the disorder that prevails in the world.

<sup>2</sup> *Consult your teacher.*] Aristotle, ἐπεὶ ἐξ ἀνομοίων ἡ πόλις, π.τ.λ. De Rep. lib. iii. cap. 4. “ Since a state is made up of members differing

Thus did he come, deducing to this point,  
 And then concluded: "For this cause behoves,  
 The roots, from whence your operations come,  
 Must differ. Therefore one is Solon born;  
 Another, Xerxes; and Melchisedec  
 A third; and he a fourth, whose airy voyage  
 Cost him his son.<sup>1</sup> In her circuitous course,  
 Nature, that is the seal to mortal wax,  
 Doth well her art, but no distinction owns  
 'Twixt one or other household. Hence befalls  
 That Esau is so wide of Jacob:<sup>2</sup> hence  
 Quirinus<sup>3</sup> of so base a father springs,  
 He dates from Mars his lineage. Were it not  
 That Providence celestial overruled,  
 Nature, in generation, must the path  
 Traced by the generator still pursue  
 Unswervingly. Thus place I in thy sight  
 That, which was late behind thee. But, in sign  
 Of more affection for thee, 'tis my will  
 Thou wear this corollary. Nature ever,  
 Finding discordant fortune, like all seed  
 Out of its proper climate, thrives but ill.  
 And were the world below content to mark

from one another (for even as an animal, in the first instance, consists of soul and body; and the soul, of reason and desire; and a family, of man and woman; and property, of master and slave; in like manner a state consists both of all these, and besides these of other dissimilar kinds); it necessarily follows, that the excellence of all the members of the state cannot be one and the same."

<sup>1</sup> ———— *Whose airy voyage  
 Cost him his son.*] Dædalus.

<sup>2</sup> *Esau is so wide of Jacob.*] Gen. xxv. 22. Venturi blames our Poet for selecting an instance, which, as that commentator says, proves the direct contrary of that which he intended, as they were born under the same ascendant; and, therefore, if the stars had any influence, the two brothers should have been born with the same temperament and disposition. This objection is well answered by Lombardi, who quotes a passage from Roger Bacon, to show that the smallest diversity of place was held to make a diversity in the influence of the heavenly bodies, so as to occasion an entire discrepancy even between children in the same womb. It must be recollected, that whatever power may be attributed to the stars by our Poet, he does not suppose it to put any constraint on the freedom of the human will; so that chimerical as his opinion appears to us, it was, in a moral point of view, at least, harmless. <sup>3</sup> *Quirinus.*] Romulus, born of so obscure a father, that his parentage was attributed to Mars.



And work on the foundation nature lays,  
 It would not lack supply of excellence.  
 But ye perversely to religion strain  
 Him, who was born to gird on him the sword,  
 And of the fluent phraseman make your king :  
 Therefore your steps have wander'd from the path."

6-27-1839

## CANTO IX

### ARGUMENT

The next spirit, who converses with our Poet in the planet Venus, is the amorous Cunizza. To her succeeds Folco, or Folques, the Provençal bard, who declares that the soul of Rahab the harlot is there also ; and then, blaming the Pope for his neglect of the holy land, prognosticates some reverse to the papal power.

AFTER solution of my doubt, thy Charles,  
 O fair Clemenza,<sup>1</sup> of the treachery <sup>2</sup> spake,  
 That must befall his seed : but, " Tell it not,"  
 Said he, " and let the destined years come round."  
 Nor may I tell thee more, save that the meed  
 Of sorrow well-deserved shall quit your wrongs.

And now the visage of that saintly light <sup>3</sup>  
 Was to the sun, that fills it, turn'd again,  
 As to the good, whose plenitude of bliss  
 Sufficeth all. O ye misguided souls !  
 Infatuate, who from such a good estrange  
 Your hearts, and bend your gaze on vanity,  
 Alas for you !—And lo ! toward me, next,  
 Another of those splendid forms approach'd  
 That, by its outward brightening, testified  
 The will it had to pleasure me. The eyes  
 Of Beatrice, resting, as before,  
 Firmly upon me, manifested forth  
 Approval of my wish. " And O," I cried,

<sup>1</sup> *O fair Clemenza.*] Daughter of Charles Martel, and second wife of Louis x. of France. <sup>2</sup> *The treachery.*] He alludes to the occupation of the kingdom of Sicily by Robert, in exclusion of his brother's son Carobert, or Charles Robert, the rightful heir. See G. Villani, lib. viii. c. cxii. <sup>3</sup> *That saintly light.*] Charles Martel.

"Blest spirit! quickly be my will perform'd;  
 And prove thou to me,<sup>1</sup> that my inmost thoughts  
 I can reflect on thee." Thereat the light,  
 That yet was new to me, from the recess,  
 Where it before was singing, thus began,  
 As one who joys in kindness: "In that part<sup>2</sup>  
 Of the depraved Italian land, which lies  
 Between Rialto and the fountain-springs  
 Of Brenta and of Piava, there doth rise,  
 But to no lofty eminence, a hill,  
 From whence erewhile a firebrand did descend,  
 That sorely shent the region. From one root  
 I and it sprang: my name on earth Cunizza<sup>3</sup>:  
 And here I glitter, for that by its light  
 This star o'ercame me. Yet I nought repine,<sup>4</sup>  
 Nor grudge myself the cause of this my lot:  
 Which haply vulgar hearts can scarce conceive.  
 "This<sup>5</sup> jewel, that is next me in our heaven,

<sup>1</sup> *Prove thou to me.*] The thoughts of all created minds being seen by the Deity, and all that is in the Deity being the object of vision to beatified spirits, such spirits must consequently see the thoughts of all created minds. Dante therefore requests of the spirit, who now approaches him, a proof of this truth with regard to his own thoughts. See v. 70. <sup>2</sup> *In that part.*] Between Rialto in the Venetian territory, and the sources of the rivers Brenta and Piava, is situated a castle called Romano, the birthplace of the famous tyrant Ezzolino, or Azzolino, the brother of Cunizza who is now speaking. The tyrant we have seen in "the river of blood." Inf., Canto xii. v. 110. <sup>3</sup> *Cunizza.*] The adventures of Cunizza, overcome by the influence of her star, are related by the chronicler Rolandino of Padua, lib. i. cap. 3, in Muratori, *Rer. It. Script.* tom. viii. p. 173. She eloped from her first husband Richard of St. Boniface, in the company of Sordello (see *Purg.* Canto vi. and vii.), with whom she is supposed to have cohabited before her marriage: then lived with a soldier of Trevigi, whose wife was living at the same time in the same city; and on his being murdered by her brother the tyrant, was by her brother married to a nobleman of Braganzo; lastly, when he also had fallen by the same hand, she, after her brother's death, was again wedded in Verona. <sup>4</sup> *Yet I nought repine.*] "I am not dissatisfied that I am not allotted a higher place." <sup>5</sup> *This.*] Folco of Genoa, a celebrated Provençal poet, commonly termed Folques of Marseilles, of which place he was perhaps bishop. Many errors of Nostradamus, concerning him, which have been followed by Crescimbeni, Quadrio, and Millot, are detected by the diligence of Tiraboschi. Mathias's edit. v. i. p. 18. All that appears certain is what we are told in this Canto, that he was of Genoa; and by Petrarch, in the *Triumph of Love*, c. iv., that he was better known by the appellation he derived from Marseilles, and at last assumed the

Lustrous and costly, great renown hath left,  
 And not to perish, ere these hundred years  
 Five times <sup>1</sup> absolve their round. Consider thou,  
 If to excel be worthy man's endeavour,  
 When such life may attend the first.<sup>2</sup> Yet they  
 Care not for this, the crowd <sup>3</sup> that now are girt  
 By Adice and Tagliamento, still  
 Impenitent, though scourged. The hour is near <sup>4</sup>  
 When for their stubbornness, at Padua's marsh  
 The water shall be changed, that laves Vicenza.  
 And where Cagnano meets with Sile, one <sup>5</sup>  
 Lords it, and bears his head aloft, for whom  
 The web <sup>6</sup> is now a-warping. Feltro <sup>7</sup> too  
 Shall sorrow for its godless shepherd's fault,  
 Of so deep stain, that never, for the like,  
 Was Malta's <sup>8</sup> bar unclosed. Too large should be  
 The skillet <sup>9</sup> that would hold Ferrara's blood,

religious habit. One of his verses is cited by Dante, *De Vulg. Eloq.* lib. iii. c. 6.

<sup>1</sup> *Five times.*] The five hundred years are elapsed: and unless the Provençal MSS. should be brought to light, the poetical reputation of Folco must rest on the mention made of him by the more fortunate Italians. What I scarcely ventured to hope at the time this note was written, has been accomplished by the great learning and diligence of M. Raynouard. See his *Choix des Poésies des Troubadours* and *Lexique Roman*, in which Folques and his Provençal brethren are awakened into the second life augured to them by our Poet.

<sup>2</sup> *When such life may attend the first.*] When the mortal life of man may be attended by so lasting and glorious a memory, which is a kind of second life.

<sup>3</sup> *The crowd.*] The people who inhabited the tract of country bounded by the river Tagliamento to the east and Adice to the west.

<sup>4</sup> *The hour is near.*] Cunizza foretells the defeat of Giacompo da Carrara and the Paduans, by Can Grande, at Vicenza, on the 18th September 1314. See G. Villani, lib. ix. cap. lxii.

<sup>5</sup> *One.*] She predicts also the fate of Riccardo da Camino, who is said to have been murdered at Trevigi (where the rivers Sile and Cagnano meet), while he was engaged in playing at chess.

<sup>6</sup> *The web.*] The net, or snare, into which he is destined to fall.

<sup>7</sup> *Feltro.*] The Bishop of Feltro having received a number of fugitives from Ferrara, who were in opposition to the Pope, under a promise of protection, afterwards gave them up; so that they were reconducted to that city, and the greater part of them there put to death.

<sup>8</sup> *Malta's.*] A tower, either in the citadel of Padua, which, under the tyranny of Ezzolino, had been "with many a foul and midnight murder fed"; or (as some say) near a river of the same name, that falls into the lake of Bolsena, in which the Pope was accustomed to imprison such as had been guilty of an irremissible sin.

<sup>9</sup> *The skillet.*] The blood shed could not be contained in such a vessel, if it were of the usual size.

And wearied he, who ounce by ounce would weigh  
it,

The which this priest,<sup>1</sup> in show of party-zeal,  
Courteous will give; nor will the gift ill suit  
The country's custom. We descry<sup>2</sup> above  
Mirrors, ye call them thrones, from which to us  
Reflected shine the judgments of our God:  
Whence these our sayings we avouch for good."

She ended; and appear'd on other thoughts  
Intent, re-entering on the wheel she late  
Had left. That other joyance<sup>3</sup> meanwhile wax'd  
A thing to marvel at, in splendour glowing,  
Like choicest ruby stricken by the sun.  
For, in that upper clime, effulgence<sup>4</sup> comes  
Of gladness, as here laughter: and below,  
As the mind saddens, murkier grows the shade.

"God seeth all: and in Him is thy sight,"  
Said I, "blest spirit! Therefore will of His  
Cannot to thee be dark. Why then delays  
Thy voice to satisfy my wish untold;  
That voice, which joins the inexpressive song,  
Pastime of heaven, the which those ardours sing,  
That cowl them with six shadowing wings<sup>5</sup> out-  
spread?

I would not wait thy asking, wert thou known  
To me, as throughly I to thee am known."

He, forthwith answering, thus his words began:  
"The valley of waters,<sup>6</sup> widest next to that<sup>7</sup>  
Which doth the earth engarland, shapes its course,

<sup>1</sup> *This priest.*] The bishop, who, to show himself a zealous partizan of the Pope, had committed the above-mentioned act of treachery. The commentators are not agreed as to the name of this faithless prelate. Troya calls him Alessandro Novello, and relates the circumstances at full. Veltro Allegorico, p. 139. <sup>2</sup> *We descry.*] "We behold the things that we predict in the mirrors of eternal truth."

<sup>3</sup> *That other joyance.*] Folco. <sup>4</sup> *Effulgence.*] As joy is expressed by laughter on earth, so is it by an increase of splendour in Paradise; and, on the contrary, grief is betokened in Hell by augmented darkness.

<sup>5</sup> *Six shadowing wings.*] "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings." Isa. vi. 2. Ante majestatis ejus gloriam cherubim senas habentes alas semper adstantes non cessant clamare, sanctus, sanctus, sanctus. Alberici, Visio, § 39. <sup>6</sup> *The valley of waters.*] The Mediterranean sea. <sup>7</sup> *That.*] The great ocean.

Between discordant shores,<sup>1</sup> against the sun  
 Inward so far, it makes meridian<sup>2</sup> there,  
 Where was before the horizon. Of that vale  
 Dwelt I upon the shore, 'twixt Ebro's stream  
 And Macra's,<sup>3</sup> that divides with passage brief  
 Genoan bounds from Tuscan. East and west  
 Are nearly one to Begga<sup>4</sup> and my land  
 Whose haven<sup>5</sup> erst was with its own blood warm.  
 Who knew my name, were wont to call me Folco;  
 And I did bear impression of this heaven,<sup>6</sup>  
 That now bears mine: for not with fiercer flame  
 Glow'd Belus' daughter,<sup>7</sup> injuring alike  
 Sichæus and Creusa, than did I,  
 Long as it suited the unripen'd down  
 That fledged my cheek; nor she of Rhodope,<sup>8</sup>  
 That was beguiled of Demophoon;  
 Nor Jove's son,<sup>9</sup> when the charms of Iole  
 Were shrined within his heart. And yet there bides  
 No sorrowful repentance here, but mirth,  
 Not for the fault (that doth not come to mind),  
 But for the virtue, whose o'erruling sway  
 And providence have wrought thus quaintly. Here  
 The skill is look'd into, that fashioneth  
 With such effectual working, and the good  
 Discern'd, accruing to the lower world<sup>10</sup>  
 From this above. But fully to content  
 Thy wishes all that in this sphere have birth,

<sup>1</sup> *Discordant shores.*] Europe and Africa. <sup>2</sup> *Meridian.*], Extending to the east, the Mediterranean at last reaches the coast of Palestine, which is on its horizon when it enters the Straits of Gibraltar. "Wherever a man is," says Vellutello, "there he has, above his head, his own particular meridian circle."

<sup>3</sup> ———— *'Twixt Ebro's stream*

*And Macra's.*] Ebro, a river to the west, and Macra, to the east of Genoa where Folco was born. <sup>4</sup> *Begga.*] A place in Africa.

<sup>5</sup> *Whose haven.*] Alluding to the terrible slaughter of the Genoese made by the Saracens in 936; for which event Vellutello refers to the history of Agustino Giustiniani. <sup>6</sup> *This heaven.*] The planet Venus, by which Folco declares himself to have been formerly influenced.

<sup>7</sup> *Belus' daughter.*] Dido. <sup>8</sup> *She of Rhodope.*] Phyllis. <sup>9</sup> *Jove's son.*] Hercules. <sup>10</sup> *To the lower world.*] I have altered my former translation here in compliance with a reading adopted by Lombardi from the Nidobeatina, *Perche 'l mondo* instead of *Perche al mondo*.

But the passage is still obscure.

Demands my further parle. Inquire thou wouldst,  
 Who of this light is denizen, that here  
 Beside me sparkles, as the sun-beam doth  
 On the clear wave. Know then, the soul of  
 Rahab <sup>1</sup>

Is in that gladsome harbour ; to our tribe  
 United, and the foremost rank assign'd.  
 She to this heaven,<sup>2</sup> at which the shadow ends  
 Of your sublunar world, was taken up,  
 First, in Christ's triumph, of all souls redeem'd.  
 For well behoved, that, in some part of heaven,  
 She should remain a trophy, to declare  
 The mighty conquest won with either palm ;<sup>3</sup>  
 For that she favour'd first the high exploit  
 Of Joshua on the holy land, whereof  
 The Pope <sup>4</sup> recks little now. Thy city, plant  
 Of him,<sup>5</sup> that on his Maker turn'd the back,  
 And of whose envying so much woe hath sprung,  
 Engenders and expands the cursed flower,<sup>6</sup>  
 That hath made wander both the sheep and lambs,  
 Turning the shepherd to a wolf. For this,  
 The gospel and great teachers laid aside,  
 The decretals,<sup>7</sup> as their stuff margins show,  
 Are the sole study. Pope and Cardinals,  
 Intent on these, ne'er journey but in thought  
 To Nazareth, where Gabriel oped his wings.

<sup>1</sup> *Rahab.*] Heb. xi. 31. <sup>2</sup> *This heaven.*] "This planet of Venus, at which the shadow of the earth ends, as Ptolemy writes in his *Almagest*." *Vellutello.* <sup>3</sup> *With either palm.*] By both His hands nailed to the cross. <sup>4</sup> *The Pope.*] "Who cares not that the holy land is in the possession of the Saracens." See also Canto xv. 136. <sup>5</sup> *Of him.*] Of Satan. <sup>6</sup> *The cursed flower.*] The coin of Florence, called the floren ; the covetous desire of which has excited the Pope to so much evil. <sup>7</sup> *The decretals.*] The canon law. So in the *De Monarchiâ*, lib. iii. p. 137. "There are also a third set, whom they call Decretalists. These, alike ignorant of theology and philosophy, relying wholly on their decretals (which I indeed esteem not unworthy of reverence), in the hope I suppose of obtaining for them a paramount influence, derogate from the authority of the empire. Nor is this to be wondered at, when I have heard one of them saying, and impudently maintaining, that traditions are the foundation of the faith of the church." He proceeds to confute this opinion, and concludes "that the church does not derive its authority from traditions, but traditions from the church" : "necesse est, ut non ecclesiæ a traditionibus, sed ab ecclesiâ traditionibus accedat autoritas."



Yet it may chance, ere long, the Vatican,<sup>1</sup>  
 And other most selected parts of Rome,  
 That were the grave of Peter's soldiery,  
 Shall be deliver'd from the adulterous bond."

## CANTO X

## ARGUMENT

Their next ascent carries them into the sun, which is the fourth heaven. Here they are encompassed with a wreath of blessed spirits, twelve in number. Thomas Aquinas, who is one of these, declares the names and endowments of the rest.

Looking into his first-born with the love  
 Which breathes from both eternal, the first Might  
 Ineffable, wherever eye or mind  
 Can roam, hath in such order all disposed,  
 As none may see and fail to enjoy. Raise, then,  
 O reader ! to the lofty wheels, with me,  
 Thy ken directed to the point,<sup>2</sup> whereat  
 One motion strikes on the other. There begin  
 Thy wonder of the mighty Architect,  
 Who loves His work so inwardly, His eye  
 Doth ever watch it. See, how thence oblique <sup>3</sup>  
 Brancheth the circle, where the planets roll  
 To pour their wished influence on the world ;  
 Whose path not bending thus, in heaven above <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Vatican.*] He alludes either to the death of Pope Boniface VIII. or, as Venturi supposes, to the coming of the Emperor Henry VII. into Italy ; or else, according to the yet more probable conjecture of Lombardi, to the transfer of the holy see from Rome to Avignon, which took place in the pontificate of Clement V.

<sup>2</sup> *The point.*] "To that part of heaven," as Venturi explains it, "in which the equinoctial circle and the zodiac intersect each other, where the common motion of the heavens from east to west may be said to strike with greatest force against the motion proper to the planets : and this repercussion, as it were, is here the strongest, because the velocity of each is increased to the utmost by their respective distance from the poles. Such at least is the system of Dante." <sup>3</sup> *Oblique.*]

*The zodiac.* <sup>4</sup> *In heaven above.*] If the planets did not preserve that order in which they move, they would not receive nor transmit their due influences : and if the zodiac were not thus oblique ; if

Much virtue would be lost, and here on earth  
 All power well nigh extinct : or, from direct  
 Were its departure distant more or less,  
 I' the universal order, great defect  
 Must, both in heaven and here beneath, ensue.

Now rest thee, reader ! on thy bench, and muse  
 Anticipative of the feast to come ;  
 So shall delight make thee not feel thy toil.  
 Lo ! I have set before thee ; for thyself  
 Feed now : the matter I indite, henceforth  
 Demands entire my thought. Join'd with the part,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which late we told of, the great minister <sup>2</sup>  
 Of nature, that upon the world imprints  
 The virtue of the heaven, and doles out  
 Time for us with his beam, went circling on  
 Along the spires,<sup>3</sup> where <sup>4</sup> each hour sooner comes ;  
 And I was with him, weetless of ascent,  
 But as a man,<sup>5</sup> that weets him come, ere thinking.

For Beatrice, she who passeth on  
 So suddenly from good to better, time  
 Counts not the act, oh then how great must needs  
 Have been her brightness ! What there was i' th'  
 sun

(Where I had enter'd), not through change of hue,  
 But light transparent—did I summon up  
 Genius, art, practice—I might not so speak,  
 It should be e'er imagined : yet believed  
 It may be, and the sight be justly craved.  
 And if our fantasy fail of such height,  
 What marvel, since no eye above the sun  
 Hath ever travell'd ? Such are they dwell here,  
 Fourth family <sup>6</sup> of the Omnipotent Sire,

towards the north it either passed, or went short of the tropic of Cancer, or else towards the south it passed, or went short of the tropic of Capricorn, it would not divide the seasons as it now does.

<sup>1</sup> *The part.*] The above-mentioned intersection of the equinoctial circle and the zodiac. <sup>2</sup> *Minister.*] The sun. <sup>3</sup> *Along the spires.*]

According to our Poet's system, as the earth is motionless, the sun passes, by a spiral motion, from one tropic to the other. <sup>4</sup> *Where.*]

In which the sun rises every day earlier after the vernal equinox. <sup>5</sup> *But as a man.*] That is, he was quite insensible of it. <sup>6</sup> *Fourth*

*family.*] The inhabitants of the sun, the fourth planet.

Who of His spirit and of His offspring <sup>1</sup> shows ;  
 And holds them still enraptured with the view.  
 And thus to me Beatrice : " Thank, oh thank  
 The Sun of angels, Him, who by His grace  
 To this perceptible hath lifted thee."

Never was heart in such devotion bound,  
 And with complacency so absolute  
 Disposed to render up itself to God,  
 As mine was at those words : and so entire  
 The love for Him, that held me, it eclipsed  
 Beatrice in oblivion. Nought displeased  
 Was she, but smiled thereat so joyously,  
 That of her laughing eyes the radiance brake  
 And scatter'd my collected mind abroad.

Then saw I a bright band, in liveliness  
 Surpassing, who themselves did make the crown,  
 And us their centre : yet more sweet in voice,  
 Than, in their visage, beaming. Cinctured thus,  
 Sometime Latona's daughter we behold,  
 When the impregnate air retains the thread  
 That weaves her zone. In the celestial court,  
 Whence I return, are many jewels found,  
 So dear and beautiful, they cannot brook  
 Transporting from that realm : and of these lights  
 Such was the song.<sup>2</sup> Who doth not prune his wing  
 To soar up thither, let him <sup>3</sup> look from thence  
 For tidings from the dumb. When, singing thus,  
 Those burning suns had circled round us thrice,  
 As nearest stars around the fixed pole ;  
 Then seem'd they like to ladies, from the dance  
 Not ceasing, but suspense, in silent pause,  
 Listening, till they have caught the strain anew :  
 Suspended so they stood : and, from within,  
 Thus heard I one, who spake : " Since with its beam  
 The grace, whence true love lighteth first his flame,

<sup>1</sup> *Of His spirit and His offspring.*] The procession of the third, and the generation of the second person in the Trinity.  
<sup>2</sup> *Such was the song.*] The song of these spirits was ineffable. It was like a jewel so highly prized, that the exportation of it to another country is prohibited by law.  
<sup>3</sup> *Let him.*] Let him not expect any intelligence at all of that place, for it surpasses description.

That after doth increase by loving, shines  
 So multiplied in thee, it leads thee up  
 Along this ladder, down whose hallow'd steps  
 None e'er descend, and mount them not again ;  
 Who from his phial should refuse thee wine  
 To slake thy thirst, no less constrained <sup>1</sup> were,  
 Than water flowing not unto the sea.

Thou fain wouldst hear, what plants are these, that  
 bloom

In the bright garland, which, admiring, girds  
 This fair dame round, who strengthens thee for heaven.  
 I, then,<sup>2</sup> was of the lambs, that Dominic  
 Leads, for his saintly flock, along the way  
 Where well they thrive, not swoln with vanity.  
 He, nearest on my right hand, brother was,  
 And master to me : Albert of Cologne <sup>3</sup>  
 Is this ; and, of Aquinum, Thomas <sup>4</sup> I.  
 If thou of all the rest wouldst be assured,  
 Let thine eye, waiting on the words I speak,  
 In circuit journey round the blessed wreath.  
 That next resplendence issues from the smile

<sup>1</sup> *No less constrained.*] "The rivers might as easily cease to flow towards the sea, as we could deny thee thy request." <sup>2</sup> *I, then.*] "I was of the Dominican order." <sup>3</sup> *Albert of Cologne.*] Albertus Magnus was born at Laugingen, in Thuringia, in 1193, and studied at Paris and at Padua ; at the latter of which places he entered into the Dominican order. He then taught theology in various parts of Germany, and particularly at Cologne. Thomas Aquinas was his favourite pupil. In 1260, he reluctantly accepted the bishopric of Ratisbon, and in two years after resigned it, and returned to his cell in Cologne, where the remainder of his life was passed in superintending the school, and in composing his voluminous works on divinity and natural science. He died in 1280. The absurd imputation of his having dealt in the magical art is well known ; and his biographers take some pains to clear him of it. *Scriptores Ordinis Prædicatorum*, by Quetif and Echard, Lut. Par. 1719, fol. tom. i. p. 162. <sup>4</sup> *Of Aquinum, Thomas.*] Thomas Aquinas, of whom Bucer is reported to have said, "Take but Thomas away, and I will overturn the Church of Rome" ; and whom Hooker terms "the greatest among the school divines" (Eccl. Pol. b. iii. § 9), was born of noble parents, who anxiously but vainly endeavoured to divert him from a life of celibacy and study. He died in 1274, at the age of forty-seven. Quetif and Echard, *ibid.* p. 271. See also *Purgatorio*, Canto xx. v. 67. A modern French writer has collected some particulars relating to the influence which the writings of Thomas Aquinas and Buonaventura had on the opinions of Dante. See the third part of Ozanam's *Dante et la Philosophie Catholique au treizième siècle*, 8°. Par. 1839.

Of Gratian,<sup>1</sup> who to either forum <sup>2</sup> lent  
 Such help, as favour wins in Paradise.  
 The other, nearest, who adorns our quire,  
 Was Peter,<sup>3</sup> he that with the widow gave <sup>4</sup>  
 To holy church his treasure. The fifth light,<sup>5</sup>  
 Goodliest of all, is by such love inspired,  
 That all your world craves tidings of his doom : <sup>6</sup>  
 Within, there is the lofty light, endow'd  
 With sapience so profound, if truth be truth,  
 That with a ken of such wide amplitude  
 No second hath arisen. Next behold  
 That taper's radiance,<sup>7</sup> to whose view was shown,  
 Clearliest, the nature and the ministry  
 Angelical, while yet in flesh it dwelt.  
 In the other little light serenely smiles  
 That pleader <sup>8</sup> for the Christian temples, he,

<sup>1</sup> *Gratian.*] "Gratian, a Benedictine monk belonging to the Convent of St. Felix and Nabor, at Bologna, and by birth a Tuscan, composed, about the year 1130, for the use of the schools, an abridgment or epitome of canon law, drawn from the letters of the pontiffs, the decrees of councils, and the writings of the ancient doctors." Maclaine's Mosheim, v. iii. cent. xii. part ii. cap. i. § 6. <sup>2</sup> *To either forum.*] "By reconciling," as Venturi explains it, "the civil with the canon law." <sup>3</sup> *Peter.*] "Pietro Lombardo was of obscure origin, nor is the place of his birth in Lombardy ascertained. With a recommendation from the Bishop of Lucca to St. Bernard, he went into France to continue his studies; and for that purpose remained some time at Rheims, whence he afterwards proceeded to Paris. Here his reputation was so great, that Philip, brother of Louis VII., being chosen Bishop of Paris, resigned that dignity to Pietro, whose pupil he had been. He held his bishopric only one year, and died 1160. His Liber Sententiarum is highly esteemed. It contains a system of scholastic theology, so much more complete than any which had been yet seen, that it may be deemed an original work." Tiraboschi, Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. iv. cap. ii. <sup>4</sup> *That with the widow gave.*] This alludes to the beginning of the Liber Sententiarum, where Peter says: "Cupiens aliquid de penuriâ ac tenuitate nostrâ cum pauperculâ in gazophylacium domini mittere, &c." <sup>5</sup> *The fifth light.*] Solomon. <sup>6</sup> *His doom.*] It was a common question, it seems, whether Solomon were saved or no. <sup>7</sup> *That taper's radiance.*] St. Dionysius, the Areopagite. "The famous Grecian fanatic, who gave himself out for Dionysius the Areopagite, disciple of St. Paul, and who, under the protection of this venerable name, gave laws and instructions to those that were desirous of raising their souls above all human things, in order to unite them to their great source by sublime contemplation, lived most probably in this century (the fourth); though some place him before, others after, the present period." Maclaine's Mosheim, v. i. cent. iv. p. ii. c. iii. § 12. <sup>8</sup> *That pleader.*] In the fifth century, Paulus Orosius "acquired a considerable degree of reputation by the History he wrote to refute the

Who did provide Augustine of his lore.  
 Now, if thy mind's eye pass from light to light,  
 Upon my praises following, of the eighth <sup>1</sup>  
 Thy thirst is next. The saintly soul, that shows  
 The world's deceitfulness, to all who hear him,  
 Is, with the sight of all the good that is,  
 Blest there. The limbs, whence it was driven, lie  
 Down in Cieldauro; <sup>2</sup> and from martyrdom  
 And exile came it here. Lo! further on,  
 Where flames the arduous spirit of Isidore; <sup>3</sup>  
 Of Bede; <sup>4</sup> and Richard, <sup>5</sup> more than man, ere-  
 while,  
 In deep discernment. Lastly this, from whom  
 Thy look on me reverteth, was the beam  
 Of one, whose spirit, on high musings bent,  
 Rebuked the lingering tardiness of death.

cavils of the Pagans against Christianity, and by his books against the Pelagians and Priscillianists." Maclaine's Mosheim, v. ii. cent. v. p. ii. c. ii. § 11. A similar train of argument was pursued by Augustine, in his book *De Civitate Dei*. Orosius is classed by Dante, in his treatise *De Vulg. Eloq.* lib. ii. cap. vi., as one of his favourite authors, among those "qui usi sunt altissimas prosas,"—"who have written prose with the greatest loftiness of style." The others are Cicero, Livy, Pliny, and Frontinus. Some commentators, with less probability, suppose that this seventh spirit is St. Ambrose, and not Orosius.

<sup>1</sup> *The eighth.*] Boëtius, whose book *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* excited so much attention during the Middle Ages, was born, as Tiraboschi conjectures, about 470. "In 524 he was cruelly put to death by command of Theodoric, either on real or pretended suspicion of his being engaged in a conspiracy." Della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. i. cap. iv. <sup>2</sup> *Cieldauro.*] Boëtius was buried at Pavia, in the monastery of San Pietro in Ciel d'oro. <sup>3</sup> *Isidore.*] He was Archbishop of Seville during forty years, and died in 635. See Mariana, *Hist.* lib. vi. cap. vii. Mosheim, whose critical opinions in general must be taken with some allowance, observes, that "his grammatical, theological, and historical productions, discover more learning and pedantry than judgment and taste." <sup>4</sup> *Bede.*] Bede, whose virtues obtained him the appellation of the Venerable, was born in 672, at Wermouth and Jarrow, in the bishopric of Durham, and died in 735. Invited to Rome by Pope Sergius I. he preferred passing almost the whole of his life in the seclusion of a monastery. A catalogue of his numerous writings may be seen in Kippis's *Biographia Britannica*, v. ii. <sup>5</sup> *Richard.*] Richard of St. Victor, a native either of Scotland or Ireland, was canon and prior of the monastery of that name at Paris; and died in 1173. "He was at the head of the Mystics in this century; and his treatise, entitled the Mystical Ark, which contains as it were the marrow of this kind of theology, was received with the greatest avidity." Maclaine's Mosheim, v. iii. cent. xii. p. ii. c. ii. § 23.



It is the eternal light of Sigebert <sup>1</sup>  
 Who escaped not envy, when of truth he argued,  
 Reading in the straw-litter'd street." <sup>2</sup> Forthwith,  
 As clock, that calleth up the spouse of God <sup>3</sup>  
 To win her bridegroom's love at matin's hour,  
 Each part of other fitly drawn and urged,  
 Sends out a tinkling sound, of note so sweet,  
 Affection springs in well-disposed breast ;  
 Thus saw I move the glorious wheel ; thus heard  
 Voice answering voice, so musical and soft,  
 It can be known but where day endless shines.

7-11-1934

## CANTO XI

## ARGUMENT

Thomas Aquinas enters at large into the life and character of St. Francis ; and then solves one of two difficulties, which he perceived to have risen in Dante's mind from what he had heard in the last Canto.

O FOND anxiety of mortal men ! <sup>4</sup>  
 How vain and inconclusive arguments  
 Are those, which make thee beat thy wings below.  
 For statutes one, and one for aphorisms <sup>5</sup>  
 Was hunting ; this the priesthood follow'd ; that,  
 By force or sophistry, aspired to rule ;  
 To rob, another ; and another sought,  
 By civil business, wealth ; one, moiling, lay  
 Tangled in net of sensual delight ;  
 And one to wistless indolence resign'd ;  
 What time from all these empty things escaped,

<sup>1</sup> *Sigebert.*] "A monk of the abbey of Gemblours, who was in high repute at the end of the eleventh, and beginning of the twelfth century." Dict. de Moreri.

<sup>2</sup> *The straw-litter'd street.*] The name of a street in Paris : the "Rue de Fouarre."

<sup>3</sup> *The spouse of God.*] The Church.

<sup>4</sup> *O fond anxiety of mortal men.*] Lucretius, lib. ii. 14.

O miseris hominum mentes ! O pectora cæca !  
 Qualibus in tenebris vitæ, quantisque periclis  
 Degitur hoc ævi quodcunque est !

<sup>5</sup> *Aphorisms.*] The study of medicine.

With Beatrice, I thus gloriously  
Was raised aloft, and made the guest of heaven.

They of the circle to that point, each one,  
Where erst it was, had turn'd ; and steady glow'd,  
As candle in his socket. Then within  
The lustre,<sup>1</sup> that erewhile bespake me, smiling  
With merer gladness, heard I thus begin :

" E'en as his beam illumines me, so I look  
Into the eternal light, and clearly mark  
Thy thoughts, from whence they rise. Thou art in  
doubt,

And wouldst that I should bolt my words afresh  
In such plain open phrase, as may be smooth  
To thy perception, where I told thee late  
That 'well they thrive';<sup>2</sup> and that 'no second such'<sup>3</sup>  
'Hath risen,' which no small distinction needs.

" The Providence, that governeth the world,  
In depth of counsel by created ken  
Unfathomable, to the end that she,<sup>4</sup>  
Who with loud cries was 'spoused in precious blood,  
Might keep her footing towards her well-beloved,<sup>5</sup>  
Safe in herself and constant unto him,  
Hath two ordain'd, who should on either hand  
In chief escort her : one,<sup>6</sup> seraphic all  
In fervency ; for wisdom upon earth,  
The other,<sup>7</sup> splendour of cherubic light.  
I but of one will tell : he tells of both,  
Who one commendeth, which of them soe'er  
Be taken : for their deeds were to one end.

" Between Tupino,<sup>8</sup> and the wave that falls  
From blest Ubaldo's chosen hill, there hangs  
Rich slope of mountain high, whence heat and cold<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The lustre.*] The spirit of Thomas Aquinas. <sup>2</sup> *That 'well they thrive.'*] See the last Canto v. 93. <sup>3</sup> *'No second such.'*] See the last Canto, v. 111. <sup>4</sup> *She.*] The Church. <sup>5</sup> *Her well-beloved.*] Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup> *One.*] St. Francis. <sup>7</sup> *The other.*] St. Dominic. <sup>8</sup> *Tupino.*] Thomas Aquinas proceeds to describe the birthplace of St. Francis, between Tupino, a rivulet near Assisi, or Ascesi, where the saint was born in 1182, and Chiasciò, a stream that rises in a mountain near Agobbio, chosen by St. Ubaldo for the place of his retirement. <sup>9</sup> *Heat and cold.*] Cold from the snow, and heat from the reflection of the sun.

Are wafted through Perugia's eastern gate :  
 And Nocera with Gualdo, in its rear,  
 Mourn for their heavy yoke.<sup>1</sup> Upon that side,  
 Where it doth brake its steepness most, arose  
 A sun upon the world, as duly this  
 From Ganges doth : therefore let none, who speak  
 Of that place, say Ascesi ; for its name  
 Were lamely so deliver'd ; but the East,  
 To call things rightly, be it henceforth styled.  
 He was not yet much distant from his rising,  
 When his good influence 'gan to bless the earth.  
 A dame,<sup>2</sup> to whom none openeth pleasure's gate  
 More than to death, was, 'gainst his father's will,<sup>3</sup>  
 His stripling choice : and he did make her his,  
 Before the spiritual court,<sup>4</sup> by nuptial bonds,  
 And in his father's sight : from day to day,  
 Then loved her more devoutly. She, bereaved  
 Of her first husband <sup>5</sup> slighted and obscure,  
 Thousands and hundred years and more, remain'd  
 Without a single suitor, till he came.  
 Nor aught avail'd, that, with Amyclas <sup>6</sup> she  
 Was found unmoved at rumour of his voice,

<sup>1</sup> *Yoke.*] Vellutello understands this of the vicinity of the mountain to Nocera and Gualdo ; and Venturi (as I have taken it) of the heavy impositions laid on those places by the Perugians. For *giogo*, like the Latin *jugum*, will admit of either sense. <sup>2</sup> *A dame.*] There is in the under church of St. Francis, at Assisi, a picture painted by Giotto from this subject. It is considered one of the artist's best works. See Kugler's Handbook of the History of Painting, translated by a lady. Lond. 1842, p. 48. <sup>3</sup> *'Gainst his father's will.*] In opposition to the wishes of his natural father. <sup>4</sup> *Before the spiritual court.*] He made a vow of poverty in the presence of the bishop and of his natural father. <sup>5</sup> *Her first husband.*] Christ. <sup>6</sup> *Amyclas.*] Lucan makes Cæsar exclaim, on witnessing the secure poverty of the fisherman Amyclas :—

— O vitæ tuta facultas  
 Pauperis, angustique lares ! O munera nondum  
 Intellecta deûm ! quibus hoc contingere templis,  
 Aut potuit muris, nullo trepidare tumultu,  
 Cæsareâ pulsante manu ?                      Phars., lib. v. 531.

O happy poverty ! thou greatest good  
 Bestow'd by heaven, but seldom understood !  
 Here nor the cruel spoiler seeks his prey,  
 Nor ruthless armies take their dreadful way, &c. Rowe.

Who shook the world : nor aught her constant boldness

Whereby with Christ she mounted on the cross,  
When Mary stay'd beneath. But not to deal  
Thus closely with thee longer, take at large  
The lovers' titles—Poverty and Francis.

Their concord, and glad looks, wonder and love,  
And sweet regard gave birth to holy thoughts,  
So much, that venerable Bernard <sup>1</sup> first

Did bare his feet, and, in pursuit of peace  
So heavenly, ran, yet deem'd his footing slow.  
O hidden riches ! O prolific good !

Egidius <sup>2</sup> bares him next, and next Sylvester, <sup>3</sup>  
And follow, both, the bridegroom : so the bride  
Can please them. Thenceforth goes he on his way  
The father and the master, with his spouse,  
And with that family, whom now the cord <sup>4</sup>

Girt humbly : nor did abjectness of heart  
Weigh down his eyelids, for that he was son  
Of Pietro Bernardone, <sup>5</sup> and by men

In wonderous sort despised. But royally  
His hard intention he to Innocent <sup>6</sup>

Set forth ; and, from him, first received the seal  
On his religion. Then, when numerous flock'd  
The tribe of lowly ones, that traced *his* steps,  
Whose marvellous life deservedly were sung

In heights empyreal ; through Honorius' <sup>7</sup> hand  
A second crown, to deck their Guardian's virtues,  
Was by the eternal Spirit inwreathed : and when  
He had, through thirst of martyrdom, stood up  
In the proud Soldan's presence, <sup>8</sup> and there preach'd

<sup>1</sup> *Bernard.*] Of Quintavalle ; one of the first followers of the saint.

<sup>2</sup> *Egidius.*] The third of his disciples, who died in 1262. His work, entitled *Verba Aurea*, was published in 1534, at Antwerp. See Lucas Waddingus, *Annales Ordinis Minoris*, p. 5. <sup>3</sup> *Sylvester.*] Another of his earliest associates.

<sup>4</sup> *Whom now the cord.*] St. Francis bound his body with a cord, in sign that he considered it as a beast, and that it required, like a beast, to be led by a halter. <sup>5</sup> *Pietro Bernardone.*] A man in an humble station of life at Assisi. <sup>6</sup> *Innocent.*] Pope Innocent III.

<sup>7</sup> *Honorius.*] His successor Honorius III., who granted certain privileges to the Franciscans. <sup>8</sup> *In the proud Soldan's presence.*] The Soldan of Egypt, before whom St. Francis is said to have preached.

Christ and His followers, but found the race  
 Unripen'd for conversion ; back once more  
 He hasted (not to intermit his toil),  
 And reap'd Ausonian lands. On the hard rock,<sup>1</sup>  
 'Twixt Arno and the Tiber, he from Christ  
 Took the last signet,<sup>2</sup> which his limbs two years  
 Did carry. Then, the season come that he,  
 Who to such good had destined him, was pleased  
 To advance him to the meed, which he had earn'd  
 By his self-humbling ; to his brotherhood,  
 As their just heritage, he gave in charge  
 His dearest lady : <sup>3</sup> and enjoin'd their love  
 And faith to her ; and, from her bosom, will'd  
 His goodly spirit should move forth, returning  
 To its appointed kingdom ; nor would have  
 His body <sup>4</sup> laid upon another bier.

“ Think now of one, who were a fit colleague  
 To keep the bark of Peter, in deep sea,  
 Helm'd to right point ; and such our Patriarch <sup>5</sup>  
 was.

Therefore who follow him as he enjoins,  
 Thou mayst be certain, take good lading in.  
 But hunger of new viands tempts his flock ; <sup>6</sup>  
 So that they needs into strange pastures wide  
 Must spread them : and the more remote from  
 him

The stragglers wander, so much more they come  
 Home, to the sheep-fold, destitute of milk.  
 There are of them, in truth, who fear their harm,  
 And to the shepherd cleave ; but these so few,  
 A little stuff may furnish out their cloaks.

“ Now, if my words be clear ; if thou have ta'en  
 Good heed ; if that, which I have told, recall  
 To mind ; thy wish may be in part fulfill'd :

<sup>1</sup> *On the hard rock.*] The mountain Alverna in the Apennine.

<sup>2</sup> *The last signet.*] Alluding to the stigmata, or marks resembling the wounds of Christ, said to have been found on the saint's body.

<sup>3</sup> *His dearest lady.*] Poverty. <sup>4</sup> *His body.*] He forbid any funeral pomp to be observed at his burial ; and, as it is said, ordered that his remains should be deposited in a place where criminals were executed and interred.

<sup>5</sup> *Our Patriarch.*] St. Dominic, to whose order Thomas Aquinas belonged. <sup>6</sup> *His flock.*] The Dominicans.

For thou wilt see the plant from whence they split ; <sup>1</sup>  
 And he shall see, who girds him, what that means,  
 ' That well they thrive, not swoln with vanity.' "

8.19.37

## CANTO XII

### ARGUMENT

A second circle of glorified souls encompasses the first. Buonaventura, who is one of them, celebrates the praises of St. Dominic, and informs Dante who the other eleven are, that are in this second circle or garland.

Soon as its final word the blessed flame <sup>2</sup>  
 Had raised for utterance, straight the holy mill <sup>3</sup>  
 Began to wheel ; nor yet had once revolved,  
 Or e'er another, circling, compass'd it,  
 Motion to motion, song to song, conjoining ;  
 Song, that as much our muses doth excel,  
 Our Syrens with their tuneful pipes, as ray  
 Of primal splendour doth its faint reflex.

As when, if Juno bid her handmaid forth,  
 Two arches parallel, and trick'd alike,  
 Span the thin cloud, the outer taking birth  
 From that within (in manner of that voice <sup>4</sup>  
 Whom love did melt away, as sun the mist)  
 And they who gaze, presageful call to mind  
 The compact, made with Noah, of the world

<sup>1</sup> *The plant from whence they split.*] "The rule of their order, which the Dominicans neglect to observe." <sup>2</sup> *The blessed flame.*] Thomas Aquinas. <sup>3</sup> *The holy mill.*] The circle of spirits. <sup>4</sup> *In manner of that voice.*] One rainbow giving back the image of the other, as sound is reflected by Echo, that nymph, who was melted away by her fondness for Narcissus, as vapour is melted by the sun. The reader will observe in the text not only a second and third simile within the first, but two mythological and one sacred allusion bound up together with the whole. Even after this accumulation of imagery, the two circles of spirits, by whom Beatrice and Dante were encompassed, are by a bold figure termed two garlands of never-fading roses. Indeed there is a fulness of splendour, even to prodigality, throughout the beginning of this Canto.



No more to be o'erflow'd ; about us thus,  
 Of sempiternal roses, bending, wreathed  
 Those garlands twain ; and to the innermost  
 E'en thus the external answer'd. When the footing,  
 And other great festivity, of song,  
 And radiance, light with light accordant, each  
 Jocund and blythe, had at their pleasure still'd,  
 (E'en as the eyes, by quick volition moved,  
 Are shut and raised together), from the heart  
 Of one <sup>1</sup> amongst the new lights <sup>2</sup> moved a voice,  
 That made me seem <sup>3</sup> like needle to the star,  
 In turning to its whereabouts ; and thus  
 Began : " The love,<sup>4</sup> that makes me beautiful,  
 Prompts me to tell of the other guide, for whom  
 Such good of mine is spoken. Where one is,  
 The other worthily should also be ;  
 That as their warfare was alike, alike  
 Should be their glory. Slow, and full of doubt,  
 And with thin ranks, after its banner moved  
 The army of Christ (which it so dearly cost  
 To reappoint), when its imperial Head,  
 Who reigneth ever, for the drooping host  
 Did make provision, through grace alone,

<sup>1</sup> *One.*] St. Buonaventura, general of the Franciscan order, in which he effected some reformation ; and one of the most profound divines of his age. " He refused the archbishopric of York, which was offered him by Clement iv., but afterwards was prevailed on to accept the bishopric of Albano and a cardinal's hat. He was born at Bagnoregio or Bagnorea, in Tuscany, A.D. 1221, and died in 1274." Dict. Histor. par Chaudon et Delandine. Ed. Lyon, 1804.

<sup>2</sup> *Amongst the new lights.*] In the circle that had newly surrounded the first. <sup>3</sup> *That made me seem.*] " That made me turn to it, as the magnetic needle does to the pole."

<sup>4</sup> *The love.*] By an act of mutual courtesy, Buonaventura, a Franciscan, is made to proclaim the praises of St. Dominic, as Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican, has celebrated those of St. Francis ; and in like manner each blames the irregularities, not of the other's order, but of that to which himself belonged. Even Macchiavelli, no great friend to the Church, attributes the revival of Christianity to the influence of these two saints. " Quanto alle Sette, si vede ancora queste rinovazioni esser necessarie, per l'esempio della nostra Religione, la quale, se non fusse stata ritirata verso il suo principio da San Francesco e da San Domenico, sarebbe al tutto spenta." Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di T. Livio, lib. iii. c. 1. " As to sects, it is seen that these renovations are necessary, by the example of our religion, which, if it had not been drawn back to its principle by St. Francis and St. Dominic, would be entirely extinguished."

And not through its deserving. As thou heard'st,<sup>1</sup>  
 Two champions to the succour of His spouse  
 He sent, who by their deeds and words might join  
 Again His scatter'd people. In that clime<sup>2</sup>  
 Where springs the pleasant west-wind to unfold  
 The fresh leaves, with which Europe sees herself  
 New-garmented; nor from those billows<sup>3</sup> far,  
 Beyond whose chiding, after weary course,  
 The sun doth sometimes<sup>4</sup> hide him; safe abides  
 The happy Callaroga,<sup>5</sup> under guard  
 Of the great shield, wherein the lion lies  
 Subjected and supreme. And there was born  
 The loving minion of the Christian faith,<sup>6</sup>  
 The hallow'd wrestler, gentle to his own,  
 And to his enemies terrible. So replete  
 His soul with lively virtue, that when first  
 Created, even in the mother's womb,<sup>7</sup>  
 It prophesied. When, at the sacred font,  
 The spousals were complete 'twixt faith and him,  
 Where pledge of mutual safety was exchanged,  
 The dame,<sup>8</sup> who was his surety, in her sleep  
 Beheld the wondrous fruit, that was from him  
 And from his heirs to issue. And that such  
 He might be construed, as indeed he was,  
 She was inspired to name him of his owner,

<sup>1</sup> *As thou heard'st.*] See the last Canto, v. 33. <sup>2</sup> *In that clime.*] Spain. <sup>3</sup> *Those billows.*] The Atlantic. <sup>4</sup> *Sometimes.* During the summer solstice. <sup>5</sup> *Callaroga.*] Between Osma and Aranda, in Old Castile designated by the royal coat of arms. <sup>6</sup> *The loving minion of the Christian faith.*] Dominic was born 5th April 1170, and died 6th August 1221. His birthplace Callaroga; his father and mother's names, Felix and Joanna; his mother's dream; his name of Dominic, given him in consequence of a vision by a noble matron who stood sponsor to him, are all told in an anonymous life of the saint, said to be written in the thirteenth century, and published by Quetif and Echard, *Scriptores Ordinis Prædicatorum*, Par. 1719, fol. tom. i. p. 25. These writers deny his having been an inquisitor, and indeed the establishment of the Inquisition itself before the fourth Lateran Council. Ibid. p. 88. <sup>7</sup> *In the mother's womb.*] His mother, when pregnant with him, is said to have dreamt that she should bring forth a white and black dog with a lighted torch in his mouth, which were signs of the habit to be worn by his order, and of his fervent zeal. <sup>8</sup> *The dame.*] His godmother's dream was, that he had one star in his forehead and another in the nape of his neck, from which he communicated light to the east and the west,

Whose he was wholly ; and so call'd him Dominic.  
 And I speak of him, as the labourer,  
 Whom Christ in His own garden chose to be  
 His help-mate. Messenger he seem'd, and friend  
 Fast-knit to Christ ; and the first love he show'd,  
 Was after the first counsel <sup>1</sup> that Christ gave.  
 Many a time <sup>2</sup> his nurse, at entering, found  
 That he had risen in silence, and was prostrate,  
 As who should say, ' My errand was for this.'  
 O happy father ! Felix <sup>3</sup> rightly named.  
 O favour'd mother ! rightly named Joanna ;  
 If that do mean, as men interpret it.<sup>4</sup>  
 Not for the world's sake, for which now they toil  
 Upon Ostiense <sup>5</sup> and Taddeo's <sup>6</sup> lore,  
 But for the real manna, soon he grew  
 Mighty in learning ; and did set himself  
 To go about the vineyard, that soon turns  
 'To wan and wither'd, if not tended well :  
 And from the see <sup>7</sup> (whose bounty to the just  
 And needy is gone by, not through its fault,  
 But his who fills it basely) he besought,  
 •No dispensation <sup>8</sup> for commuted wrong,  
 Nor the first vacant fortune,<sup>9</sup> nor the tenths

<sup>1</sup> *After the first counsel.*] "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come and follow Me." Matt. xix. 21. Dominic is said to have followed this advice. <sup>2</sup> *Many a time.*] His nurse, when she returned to him, often found that he had left his bed, and was prostrate, and in prayer. <sup>3</sup> *Felix.*] Felix Gusman. <sup>4</sup> *As men interpret it.*] Grace or gift of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> *Ostiense.*] Arrigo, a native of Susa, formerly a considerable city in Piedmont, and cardinal of Ostia and Velletri, whence he acquired the name of Ostiense, was celebrated for his lectures on the five books of the Decretals. He flourished about the year 1250. <sup>6</sup> *Taddeo.*] It is uncertain whether he speaks of the physician or the lawyer of that name. The former, Taddeo d'Alderotto, a Florentine, called the Hippocratean, translated the ethics of Aristotle into Latin ; and died at an advanced age towards the end of the thirteenth century. The other, who was of Bologna and celebrated for his legal knowledge, left no writings behind him. <sup>7</sup> *The see.*] "The apostolic see, which no longer continues its wonted liberality towards the indigent and deserving ; not indeed through its own fault, as its doctrines are still the same, but through the fault of the pontiff, who is seated in it." <sup>8</sup> *No dispensation.*] Dominic did not ask licence to compound for the use of unjust acquisitions by dedicating a part of them to pious purposes. <sup>9</sup> *Nor the first vacant fortune.*] Not the first benefice that fell vacant.

That to God's paupers rightly appertain,  
 But, 'gainst an erring and degenerate world,  
 Licence to fight, in favour of that seed <sup>1</sup>  
 From which the twice twelve scions gird thee round.  
 Then, with sage doctrine and good will to help,  
 Forth on his great apostleship he fared,  
 Like torrent bursting from a lofty vein ;  
 And, dashing 'gainst the stocks of heresy,  
 Smote fiercest, where resistance was most stout.  
 Thence many rivulets have since been turn'd,  
 Over the garden catholic to lead  
 Their living waters, and have fed its plants.

" If such, one wheel <sup>2</sup> of that two-yoked car,  
 Wherein the holy church defended her,  
 And rode triumphant through the civil broil ;  
 Thou canst not doubt its fellow's excellence,  
 Which Thomas,<sup>3</sup> ere my coming, hath declared  
 So courteously unto thee. But the track,<sup>4</sup>  
 Which its smooth fellies made, is now deserted :  
 That, mouldy mother is, where late were lees.  
 His family, that wont to trace his path,  
 Turn backward, and invert their steps ; erelong  
 To rue the gathering in of their ill crop,  
 When the rejected tares <sup>5</sup> in vain shall ask  
 Admittance to the barn. I question not <sup>6</sup>  
 But he, who search'd our volume, leaf by leaf,  
 Might still find page with this inscription on't,  
 ' I am as I was wont.' Yet such were not  
 From Acquasparta nor Casale, whence,

<sup>1</sup> *In favour of that seed.*] " For that seed of the divine word, from which have sprung up these four and twenty plants, these holy spirits that now environ thee." <sup>2</sup> *One wheel.*] Dominic; as the other wheel is Francis. <sup>3</sup> *Thomas.*] Thomas Aquinas. <sup>4</sup> *But the track.*] " But the rule of St. Francis is already deserted: and the lees of the wine are turned into mouldiness." <sup>5</sup> *Tares.*] He adverts to the parable of the tares and the wheat. <sup>6</sup> *I question not.*] " Some indeed might be found, who still observe the rule of the order: but such would come neither from Casale nor Acquasparta." At Casale, in Monferrat, the discipline had been enforced by Uberto with unnecessary rigour; and at Acquasparta, in the territory of Todi, it had been equally relaxed by the Cardinal Matteo, general of the order. Lucas Waddingus, as cited by Lombardi, corrects the errors of the commentators who had confounded these two.

Of those who come to meddle with the text,  
 One stretches and another cramps its rule.  
 Bonaventura's life in me behold,  
 From Bagnoregio ; one, who, in discharge  
 Of my great offices, still laid aside  
 All sinister aim. Illuminato here,  
 And Agostino <sup>1</sup> join me : two they were,  
 Among the first of those barefooted meek ones,  
 Who sought God's friendship in the cord : with them  
 Hugues of St. Victor <sup>2</sup> ; Pietro Mangiadore ; <sup>3</sup>  
 And he of Spain <sup>4</sup> in his twelve volumes shining ;  
 Nathan the prophet ; Metropolitan  
 Chrysostom ; <sup>5</sup> and Anselmo ; <sup>6</sup> and, who deign'd

<sup>1</sup> ——— *Illuminato here,*

*And Agostino.]* Two among the earliest followers of St. Francis.

<sup>2</sup> *Hugues of St. Victor.]* Landino makes him of Pavia ; Venturi calls him a Saxon ; and Lombardi, following Alexander Natalis, Hist. Eccl. Sæc. xi. cap. 6, art. 9, says that he was from Ypres. He was of the monastery of St. Victor at Paris, and died in 1142, at the age of forty-four. His ten books, illustrative of the celestial hierarchy of Dionysius the Areopagite, according to the translation of Joannes Scotus, are inscribed to King Louis, son of Louis le Gros, by whom the monastery had been founded. Opera Hug. de S. Vict. fol. Paris, 1526, tom. i. 329. "A man distinguished by the fecundity of his genius, who treated, in his writings, of all the branches of sacred and profane erudition that were known in his time, and who composed several dissertations that are not destitute of merit." Maclaine's Mosheim, Eccl. Hist. v. iii. cent. xii. p. ii. c. ii. § 23. <sup>3</sup> *Pietro Mangiadore.]*

"Petrus Comestor, or the Eater, born at Troyes, was canon and dean of that church, and afterwards chancellor of the church of Paris. He relinquished these benefices to become a regular canon of St. Victor at Paris, where he died in 1198." Chaudon et Delandine, Dict. Hist. Ed. Lyon, 1804. The work, by which he is best known, is his *Historia Scolastica*, which I shall have occasion to cite in the Notes to Canto xxvi.

<sup>4</sup> *He of Spain.]* "To Pope Adrian v. succeeded John xxv. a native of Lisbon ; a man of great genius and extraordinary acquirements, especially in logic and in medicine, as his books written in the name of Peter of Spain (by which he was known before he became Pope) may testify. His life was not much longer than that of his predecessors, for he was killed at Viterbo, by the falling in of the roof of his chamber, after he had been pontiff only eight months and as many days," A.D. 1277. Mariana, Hist. de Esp. l. xiv. c. 2. <sup>5</sup> *Chrysostom.]* The eloquent patriarch of Constantinople.

<sup>6</sup> *Anselmo.]* "Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born at Aosta, about 1034, and studied under Lanfranc, at the monastery of Bec in Normandy, where he afterwards devoted himself to a religious life, in his twenty-seventh year. In three years he was made prior, and then abbot of that monastery ; from whence he was taken, in 1093, to succeed to the archbishopric, vacant by the death of Lanfranc. He enjoyed this dignity till his death, in 1109, though it was disturbed



To put his hand to the first art, Donatus.<sup>1</sup>  
 Raban<sup>2</sup> is here; and at my side there shines  
 Calabria's abbot, Joachim,<sup>3</sup> endow'd  
 With soul prophetic. The bright courtesy  
 Of friar Thomas and his goodly lore,  
 Have moved me to the blazon of a peer<sup>4</sup>  
 So worthy; and with me have moved this throng."

## CANTO XIII

## ARGUMENT

Thomas Aquinas resumes his speech. He solves the other of those doubts which he discerned in the mind of Dante, and warns him earnestly against assenting to any proposition without having duly examined it.

LET him,<sup>5</sup> who would conceive what now I saw,  
 Imagine (and retain the image firm  
 As mountain rock, the whilst he hears me speak),

by many dissensions with William II. and Henry I. respecting immunities and investitures. There is much depth and precision in his theological works." Tiraboschi, *Stor. della Lett. Ital.* tom. iii. lib. iv. cap. 2. Ibid. c. v. "It is an observation made by many modern writers, that the demonstration of the existence of God taken from the idea of a Supreme Being, of which Descartes is thought to be the author, was so many ages back discovered and brought to light by Anselm. Leibnitz himself makes the remark, vol. v. *Oper.* p. 570. Edit. Genev. 1768."

<sup>1</sup> *Donatus.*] Ælius Donatus, the grammarian, in the fourth century, one of the preceptors of St. Jerome. <sup>2</sup> *Raban.*] "He was made Archbishop of Mentz in 847. His *Latino-Theotische Glossary* of the Bible is still preserved in the imperial library at Vienna. See Lambesius, *Comment. de Bibl.* lib. ii. p. 416 and 932." Gray's Works, 4to. Lond. 1814, vol. ii. p. 33. "Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz, is deservedly placed at the head of the Latin writers of this age." Mosheim, v. ii. cent. ix. p. ii. c. ii. § 14. <sup>3</sup> *Joachim.*] Abbot of Flora in Calabria; "whom the multitude revered as a person divinely inspired, and equal to the most illustrious prophets of ancient times." Mosheim, v. iii. cent. xiii. p. ii. c. ii. § 33. <sup>4</sup> *A peer.*] St. Dominic. <sup>5</sup> *Let him.*] "Whoever would conceive the sight that now presented itself to me, must imagine to himself fifteen of the brightest stars in heaven, together with seven stars of Arcturus Major and two of Arcturus Minor, ranged in two circles, one within the other, each resembling the crown of Ariadne, and moving round in opposite directions."



Of stars, fifteen, from midst the ethereal host  
 Selected, that, with lively ray serene,  
 O'ercome the massiest air : thereto imagine  
 The wain, that, in the bosom of our sky,  
 Spins ever on its axle night and day,  
 With the bright summit of that horn, which swells  
 Due from the pole, round which the first wheel rolls,  
 To have ranged themselves in fashion of two signs  
 In heaven, such as Ariadne made,  
 When death's chill seized her ; and that one of them  
 Did compass in the other's beam ; and both  
 In such sort whirl around, that each should tend  
 With opposite motion ; and, conceiving thus,  
 Of that true constellation, and the dance  
 Twofold, that circled me, he shall attain  
 As 'twere the shadow ; for things there as much  
 Surpass our usage, as the swiftest heaven  
 Is swifter than the Chiana.<sup>1</sup> There was sung  
 No Bacchus, and no Io Pæan, but  
 Three Persons in the Godhead, and in one  
 Person that nature and the human join'd.  
 The song and round were measured : and to us  
 Those saintly lights attended, happier made  
 At each new ministering. Then silence brake  
 Amid the accordant sons of Deity,  
 That luminary,<sup>2</sup> in which the wondrous life  
 Of the meek man of God <sup>3</sup> was told to me ;  
 And thus it spake : " One ear <sup>4</sup> o' the harvest  
     thresh'd,  
 And its grain safely stored, sweet charity  
 Invites me with the other to like toil.

" Thou know'st, that in the bosom,<sup>5</sup> whence the rib

<sup>1</sup> *The Chiana.*] See Inf., Canto xxix. 45.      <sup>2</sup> *That luminary.*] Thomas Aquinas.      <sup>3</sup> *The meek man of God.*] St. Francis. See Canto xi. 25.      <sup>4</sup> *One ear.*] " Having solved one of thy questions, I

proceed to answer the other. Thou thinkest then that Adam and Christ were both endued with all the perfection of which the human nature is capable ; and therefore wonderest at what has been said concerning Solomon."      <sup>5</sup> *In the bosom.*] " Thou knowest that in the breast of Adam, whence the rib was taken to make that fair cheek of Eve, which, by tasting the apple, brought death into the world ; and also in the breast of Christ, which, being pierced by the lance, made

Was ta'en to fashion that fair cheek, whose taste  
 All the world pays for ; and in that, which pierced  
 By the keen lance, both after and before  
 Such satisfaction offer'd as outweighs  
 Each evil in the scale ; whate'er of light  
 To human nature is allow'd, must all  
 Have by His virtue been infused, who form'd  
 Both one and other : and thou thence admirest  
 In that I told thee, of beatitudes,  
 A second there is none to him enclosed  
 In the fifth radiance. Open now thine eyes  
 To what I answer thee ; and thou shalt see  
 Thy deeming and my saying meet in truth,  
 As centre in the round. That <sup>1</sup> which dies not,  
 And that which can die, are but each the beam  
 Of that idea, which our Sovereign Sire  
 Engendereth loving ; for that lively light,<sup>2</sup>  
 Which passeth from His splendour, not disjoin'd  
 From Him, nor from His love triune with them,<sup>3</sup>  
 Doth, through His bounty, congregate itself,  
 Mirror'd, as 'twere, in new existences ;<sup>4</sup>  
 Itself unalterable, and ever one.

“ Descending hence unto the lowest powers,<sup>5</sup>  
 Its energy so sinks, at last it makes  
 But brief contingencies ; for so I name  
 Things generated, which the heavenly orbs  
 Moving, with seed or without seed, produce.  
 Their wax, and that which molds it,<sup>6</sup> differ much :  
 And thence with lustre, more or less, it shows

satisfaction for the sins of the whole world ; as much wisdom resided, as human nature was capable of : and thou dost therefore wonder that I should have spoken of Solomon as the wisest.” See Canto x. 105.

<sup>1</sup> *That.*] “ Things, corruptible and incorruptible, are only emanations from the archetypal idea residing in the Divine Mind.”  
<sup>2</sup> *Light.*] The Word : the Son of God. <sup>3</sup> *His love triune with them.*] The Holy Ghost. <sup>4</sup> *New existences.*] Angels and human souls. If we read with some editions and many MSS. “ nove ” instead of “ nuove,” it should be rendered “ nine existences,” and then means “ the nine heavens ” ; and this reading is approved by Lombardi, Biagioli, and Monti. In the terms “ sussistenza ” and “ contingenze,” “ existences and contingencies,” Dante follows the language of the scholastic writers, which I have endeavoured to preserve. <sup>5</sup> *The lowest powers.*] Irrational life and brute matter. <sup>6</sup> *Their wax, and that which molds it.*] Matter, and the virtue or energy that acts on it.

The ideal stamp imprest : so that one tree,  
 According to his kind, hath better fruit,  
 And worse : and, at your birth, ye, mortal men,  
 Are in your talents various. Were the wax  
 Molded with nice exactness, and the heaven <sup>1</sup>  
 In its disposing influence supreme,  
 The brightness of the seal <sup>2</sup> should be complete :  
 But nature renders it imperfect ever ;  
 Resembling thus the artist, in ~~his~~ work,  
 Whose faltering hand is faithless to his skill.  
 Therefore, <sup>3</sup> if fervent love dispose, and mark  
 The lustrous image of the primal virtue,  
 There all perfection is vouchsafed ; and such  
 The clay <sup>4</sup> was made, accomplish'd with each gift,  
 That life can teem with ; such the burden fill'd  
 The virgin's bosom : so that I commend  
 Thy judgment, that the human nature ne'er  
 Was, or can be, such as in them it was.

“ Did I advance no further than this point ;  
 ‘ How then had he no peer ? ’ thou might'st reply.  
 But, that what now appears not, may appear  
 Right plainly, ponder, who he was, and what  
 (When he was bidden ‘ Ask ’) the motive, sway'd  
 To his requesting. I have spoken thus,  
 That thou mayst see, he was a king, who ask'd <sup>5</sup>  
 For wisdom, to the end he might be king  
 Sufficient : not, the number <sup>6</sup> to search out  
 Of the celestial movers ; or to know,  
 If necessary <sup>7</sup> with contingent e'er

<sup>1</sup> *The heaven.*] The influence of the planetary bodies. <sup>2</sup> *The brightness of the seal.*] The brightness of the Divine idea before spoken of. <sup>3</sup> *Therefore.*] Daniello, says Lombardi, has shown his sagacity in remarking that our Poet intends this for a brief description of the Trinity: the primal virtue signifying the Father; the lustrous image, the Son; the fervent love, the Holy Ghost. <sup>4</sup> *The clay.*] Adam. <sup>5</sup> *Who ask'd.*] “ He did not desire to know the number of the celestial intelligences, or to pry into the subtleties of logical, metaphysical, or mathematical science: but asked for that wisdom which might fit him for his kingly office.” <sup>6</sup> *The number.*] This question is discussed by our Poet himself in the Convito, p. 49. <sup>7</sup> *If necessary.*] “ If a premise necessarily true, with one not necessarily true, ever produced a necessary consequence: a question resolved in the negative by the art of logic, with that general rule, conclusio sequitur debiliorem partem.” Lombardi.

Have made necessity ; or whether that  
Be granted, that first motion <sup>1</sup> is ; or if,  
Of the mid circle, <sup>2</sup> can by art be made  
Triangle, with its corner blunt or sharp.

“ Whence, noting that, which I have said, and  
this,

Thou kingly prudence and that ken <sup>3</sup> mayst learn,  
At which the dart of my intention aims.  
And, marking clearly, that I told thee, ‘ Risen,’  
Thou shalt discern it only hath respect  
To kings, of whom are many, and the good  
Are rare. With this distinction take my words ;  
And they may well consist with that which thou  
Of the first human father dost believe,  
And of our well-beloved. And let this  
Henceforth be lead unto thy feet, to make  
Thee slow in motion, as a weary man,  
Both to the ‘ yea ’ and to the ‘ nay ’ thou seest  
not.

For he among the fools is down full low,  
Whose affirmation, or denial, <sup>4</sup> is  
Without distinction, in each case alike.  
Since it befalls, that in most instances  
Current opinion leans to false : and then  
Affection bends the judgment to her ply.

“ Much more than vainly doth he loose from  
shore,

Since he returns not such as he set forth,  
Who fishes for the truth and wanteth skill.  
And open proofs of this unto the world

<sup>1</sup> *That first motion.*] “ If we must allow one first motion, which is not caused by other motion : a question resolved affirmatively by metaphysics, according to that principle, repugnat in causis processus in infinitum.” Lombardi. <sup>2</sup> *Of the mid circle.*] “ If in the half of the circle a rectilinear triangle can be described, one side of which shall be the diameter of the same circle, without its forming a right angle with the other two sides ; which geometry shows to be impossible.” Lombardi. <sup>3</sup> *That ken.*] See Canto x. 110. <sup>4</sup> *Whose affirmation, or denial.*] Τῶν γὰρ ἄρτι δεινότερα ἂν τις ὁμολογήσειε, μὴ προσχῶν τοῖς ῥήμασι τὸν νοῦν, ἢ τοπολὸν εἰδόμεθα ζῆναι τε καὶ ἀπαρνέσθαι. Plato, Theætetus. Ed. Bip. v. ii. p. 97. “ For any one might make yet absurder concessions than these, not paying strict attention to terms, according to the way in which we are for the most part accustomed both to affirm and to deny.”

Have been afforded in Parmenides,  
 Melissus, Bryso,<sup>1</sup> and the crowd beside,  
 Who journey'd on, and knew not whither : so did  
 Sabellius, Arius,<sup>2</sup> and the other fools,  
 Who, like to scymitars,<sup>3</sup> reflected back  
 The scripture-image by distortion marr'd.

“ Let not the people be too swift to judge ;  
 As one who reckons on the blades in field,  
 Or e'er the crop be ripe. For I have seen  
 The thorn frown rudely all the winter long,  
 And after bear the rose upon its top ;  
 And bark, that all her way across the sea  
 Ran straight and speedy, perish at the last  
 E'en in the haven's mouth. Seeing one steal,  
 Another bring his offering to the priest,  
 Let not <sup>4</sup> Dame Bertha and Sir Martin <sup>5</sup> thence  
 Into heaven's counsels deem that they can pry :  
 For one of these may rise, the other fall.”

<sup>1</sup> ———— *Parmenides*,

*Melissus, Bryso.*] For the singular opinions entertained by the two former of these heathen philosophers, see Diogenes Laertius, lib. ix. and Aristot. de Cœlo, lib. iii. cap. i. and Phys. lib. i. cap. ii. The last is also twice adduced by Aristotle (Anal. Post. lib. i. cap. ix. and Rhet. lib. iii. cap. ii.) as affording instances of false reasoning. Our Poet refers to the philosopher's refutation of them in the *De Monarchiâ*, lib. iii. p. 138. See also Plato in the *Theætetus*, the *Sophist*, and the *Parmenides*. <sup>2</sup> *Sabellius, Arius.*] Well-known heretics.

<sup>3</sup> *Scymitars.*] A passage in the travels of Bertradon de la Brocquière, translated by Johnes, will explain this allusion, which has given some trouble to the commentators. That traveller, who wrote before Dante, informs us, p. 138, that the wandering Arabs used their scymitars as mirrors. <sup>4</sup> *Let not.*] “ Let not short-sighted mortals presume to decide on the future doom of any man, from a consideration of his present character and actions.” This is meant as an answer to the doubts entertained respecting the salvation of Solomon. See Canto x. 107. <sup>5</sup> *Dame Bertha and Sir Martin.*] Names put generally for any persons who have more curiosity than discretion.

8-1-1939

## CANTO XIV

## ARGUMENT

Solomon, who is one of the spirits in the inner circle, declares what the appearance of the blest will be after the resurrection of the body. Beatrice and Dante are translated into the fifth heaven, which is that of Mars; and here behold the souls of those who had died fighting for the true faith, ranged in the sign of a cross, athwart which the spirits move to the sound of a melodious hymn.

FROM centre to the circle, and so back  
 From circle to the centre, water moves  
 In the round chalice, even as the blow  
 Impels it, inwardly, or from without.  
 Such was the image <sup>1</sup> glanced into my mind,  
 As the great spirit of Aquinum ceased;  
 And Beatrice, after him, her words  
 Resumed alternate: "Need there is (though yet  
 He tells it to you not in words, nor e'en  
 In thought) that he should fathom to its depth  
 Another mystery. Tell him, if the light,  
 Wherewith your substance blooms, shall stay with  
 you

Eternally, as now; and, if it doth,  
 How, when <sup>2</sup> ye shall regain your visible forms,  
 The sight may without harm endure the change,  
 That also tell." As those, who in a ring  
 Tread the light measure, in their fitful mirth  
 Raise loud the voice, and spring with gladder bound;  
 Thus, at the hearing of that pious suit,  
 The saintly circles, in their tourneying  
 And wondrous note, attested new delight.

Whoso laments, that we must doff this garb  
 Of frail mortality, thenceforth to live  
 Immortally above; he hath not seen  
 The sweet refreshing of that heavenly shower.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Such was the image.*] The voice of Thomas Aquinas proceeding from the circle to the centre; and that of Beatrice, from the centre to the circle. <sup>2</sup> *When.*] When ye shall be again clothed with your bodies at the resurrection. <sup>3</sup> *That heavenly shower.*] That effusion of beatific light.



Him, who lives ever, and for ever reigns  
In mystic union of the Three in One,  
Unbounded, bounding all, each spirit thrice  
Sang, with such melody, as, but to hear,  
For highest merit were an ample meed.  
And from the lesser orb the goodliest light,<sup>1</sup>  
With gentle voice and mild, such as perhaps  
The angel's once to Mary, thus replied :  
" Long as the joy of Paradise shall last,  
Our love shall shine around that raiment, bright  
As fervent ; fervent as, in vision, blest ;  
And that as far, in blessedness, exceeding,  
As it hath grace, beyond its virtue, great.  
Our shape, regarmented with glorious weeds  
Of saintly flesh, must, being thus entire,  
Show yet more gracious. Therefore shall increase  
Whate'er, of light, gratuitous imparts  
The Supreme Good ; light, ministering aid,  
The better to disclose His glory ; whence,  
The vision needs increasing, must increase  
The fervour, which it kindles ; and that too  
The ray, that comes from it. But as the gleed  
Which gives out flame, yet in its whiteness shines  
More livelily than that, and so preserves  
Its proper semblance ; thus this circling sphere  
Of splendour shall to view less radiant seem,  
Than shall our fleshly robe, which yonder earth  
Now covers. Nor will such excess of light  
O'erpower us, in corporeal organs made  
Firm, and susceptible of all delight."

So ready and so cordial an " Amen "  
Follow'd from either choir, as plainly spoke  
Desire of their dead bodies ; yet perchance  
Not for themselves, but for their kindred dear,  
Mothers and sires, and those whom best they loved,  
Ere they were made imperishable flame.

And lo ! forthwith there rose up round about  
A lustre, over that already there ;  
Of equal clearness, like the brightening up

<sup>1</sup> *The goodliest light.*] Solomon.

Of the horizon. As at evening hour  
 Of twilight, new appearances through heaven  
 Peer with faint glimmer, doubtfully descried ;  
 So, there, new substances, methought, began  
 To rise in view beyond the other twain,  
 And wheeling, sweep their ampler circuit wide.

O genuine glitter of eternal Beam !  
 With what a sudden whiteness did it flow,  
 O'erpowering vision in me. But so fair,  
 So passing lovely, Beatrice show'd,  
 Mind cannot follow it, nor words express  
 Her infinite sweetness. Thence mine eyes regain'd  
 Power to look up ; and I beheld myself,  
 Sole with my lady, to more lofty bliss <sup>1</sup>  
 Translated : for the star, with warmer smile  
 Impurpled, well denoted our ascent.

With all the heart, and with that tongue which  
 speaks

The same in all, an holocaust I made  
 To God befitting the new grace vouchsafed.  
 And from my bosom had not yet upsteam'd  
 The fuming of that incense, when I knew  
 The rite accepted. With such mighty sheen  
 And mantling crimson, in two listed rays  
 The splendours shot before me, that I cried,  
 " God of Sabaoth ! that dost prank them thus ! "

As leads the galaxy from pole to pole,  
 Distinguish'd into greater lights and less,  
 Its pathway,<sup>2</sup> which the wisest fail to spell ;

<sup>1</sup> *To more lofty bliss.*] To the planet Mars. <sup>2</sup> *Its pathway.*] See the Convito, p. 74. "E da sapere, &c." "It must be known, that, concerning the galaxy, philosophers have entertained different opinions. The Pythagoreans say that the sun once wandered out of his way ; and passing through other parts not suited to his heat, scorched the place through which he passed ; and that there was left that appearance of the scorching. I think they grounded their opinion on the fable of Phaëton, which Ovid relates at the beginning of his Metamorphoses. Others (as Anaxagoras and Democritus) said that it proceeded from a partial repercussion of the solar light, which they proved by such reasons as they could bring to demonstrate it. What Aristotle has said, cannot well be known ; because his meaning is not made the same in one translation as in another ; and I think it must have been an error in the translators ; for, in the new, he seems to say that it is a collection

So thickly studded, in the depth of Mars,  
Those rays described the venerable sign,<sup>1</sup>  
That quadrants in the round conjoining frame.

Here memory mocks the toil of genius. Christ  
Beam'd on that cross ; and pattern fails me now.  
But whoso takes his cross, and follows Christ,  
Will pardon me for that I leave untold,  
When in the flecker'd dawning he shall spy  
The glitterance of Christ. From horn to horn,  
And 'tween the summit and the base, did move  
Lights, scintillating, as they met and pass'd.  
Thus oft are seen with ever-changeful glance,  
Straight or athwart, now rapid and now slow,  
The atomies of bodies, long or short,  
To move along the sunbeam, whose slant line  
Checkers the shadow interposed by art  
Against the noontide heat. And as the chime  
Of minstrel music, dulcimer, and harp  
With many strings, a pleasant dinning makes  
To him, who heareth not distinct the note ;  
So from the lights, which there appear'd to me,  
Gather'd along the cross a melody,  
That, indistinctly heard, with ravishment  
Possess'd me. Yet I mark'd it was a hymn  
Of lofty praises ; for there came to me  
" Arise," and " Conquer," as to one who hears  
And comprehends not. Me such ecstasy  
O'ercame, that never, till that hour, was thing  
That held me in so sweet imprisonment.

Perhaps my saying overbold appears,  
Accounting less the pleasure of those eyes,  
Whereon to look fulfilleth all desire.

of vapours under the stars, which they always attract in that part ; and this appears devoid of any true reason. In the old, he says that the galaxy is nothing else than a multitude of fixed stars in that part, so small, that here below we cannot distinguish them ; but that they form the appearance of that whiteness, which we call the galaxy. And it may be, that the heaven in that part is dense, and therefore retains and represents that light ; and in this opinion Avicen and Ptolemy seem to agree with Aristotle."

<sup>1</sup> *The venerable sign.*] The cross, which is placed in the planet of Mars, to denote the glory of those who fought in the crusades.

But he,<sup>1</sup> who is aware those living seals  
 Of every beauty work with quicker force,  
 The higher they are risen ; and that there  
 I had not turn'd me to them ; he may well  
 Excuse me that, whereof, in my excuse  
 I do accuse me, and may own my truth ;  
 That holy pleasure here not yet reveal'd,  
 Which grows in transport as we mount aloof.

## CANTO XV

### ARGUMENT

The spirit of Cacciaguida, our Poet's ancestor, glides rapidly to the foot of the cross ; tells who he is ; and speaks of the simplicity of the Florentines in his days, since then much corrupted.

TRUE love, that ever shows itself as clear  
 In kindness, as loose appetite in wrong,  
 Silenced that lyre harmonious, and still'd  
 The sacred chords, that are by heaven's right hand  
 Unwound and tighten'd. How to righteous prayers  
 Should they not hearken, who, to give me will  
 For praying, in accordance thus were mute ?  
 He hath in sooth good cause for endless grief,  
 Who, for the love of thing that lasteth not,  
 Despoils himself for ever of that love.

As oft along the still and pure serene,  
 At nightfall, glides a sudden trail of fire,  
 Attracting with involuntary heed  
 The eye to follow it, erewhile at rest ;  
 And seems some star that shifted place in heaven,  
 Only that, whence it kindles, none is lost,  
 And it is soon extinct : thus from the horn,  
 That on the dexter of the cross extends,

<sup>1</sup> *He.*] " He, who considers that the eyes of Beatrice became more radiant the higher we ascended, must not wonder that I do not except even them, as I had not yet beheld them since our entrance into this planet."

Down to its foot, one luminary ran  
 From mid the cluster shone there ; yet no gem  
 Dropp'd from its foil : and through the beamy list,  
 Like flame in alabaster, glow'd its course.

So forward stretch'd him (if of credence aught  
 Our greater muse <sup>1</sup> may claim) the pious ghost  
 Of Old Anchises, in the Elysian bower,  
 When he perceived his son. " O thou, my blood !  
 O most exceeding grace divine ! to whom,  
 As now to thee, hath twice the heavenly gate  
 Been e'er unclosed ? " So spake the light : whence I  
 Turn'd me toward him ; then unto my dame  
 My sight directed : and on either side  
 Amazement waited me ; for in her eyes  
 Was lighted such a smile, I thought that mine  
 Had dived unto the bottom of my grace  
 And of my bliss in Paradise. Forthwith,  
 To hearing and to sight grateful alike,  
 The spirit to his proem added things  
 I understood not, so profound he spake :  
 Yet not of choice, but through necessity,  
 Mysterious ; for his high conception soar'd  
 Beyond the mark of mortals. When the flight  
 Of holy transport had so spent its rage,  
 That nearer to the level of our thought  
 The speech descended ; the first sounds I heard  
 Were, " Blest be thou, Triunal Deity !  
 That hast such favour in my seed vouchsafed."  
 Then follow'd : " No unpleasant thirst, though long,<sup>2</sup>  
 Which took me reading in the sacred book,  
 Whose leaves or white or dusky never change,  
 Thou hast allay'd, my son ! within this light,  
 From whence my voice thou hear'st : more thanks  
 to her

<sup>1</sup> *Our greater muse.*] Virgil, *Æn.* lib. vi. 684.

Isque ubi tendentem adversum per gramina vidit  
 Ænean, alacris palmas utrasque tetendit.  
 Venisti tandem, tuaque spectata parenti  
 Vicit iter durum pietas ?

<sup>2</sup> *No unpleasant thirst, though long.*] " Thou hast satisfied the long yet pleasing desire which I have felt to see thee, through my knowledge of thee, obtained in the immutable decrees of the divine Providence."

Who, for such lofty mounting, has with plumes  
 Begirt thee. Thou dost deem thy thoughts to me  
 From Him transmitted, who is first of all,  
 E'en as all numbers ray from unity ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And therefore dost not ask me who I am,  
 Or why to thee more joyous I appear,  
 Than any other in this gladsome throng.  
 The truth is as thou deem'st ; for in this life  
 Both less and greater in that mirror look,  
 In which thy thoughts, or e'er thou think'st, are  
 shown.

But, that the love, which keeps me wakeful ever,  
 Urging with sacred thirst of sweet desire,  
 May be contented fully ; let thy voice,  
 Fearless, and frank, and jocund, utter forth  
 Thy will distinctly, utter forth the wish,  
 Whereto my ready answer stands decreed."

I turn'd me to Beatrice ; and she heard  
 Ere I had spoken, smiling an assent,  
 That to my will gave wings ; and I began :  
 " To each among your tribe,<sup>2</sup> what time ye kenn'd  
 The nature, in whom nought unequal dwells.  
 Wisdom and love were in one measure dealt ;  
 For that they are so equal in the sun,  
 From whence ye drew your radiance and your heat,  
 As makes all likeness scant. But will and means,  
 In mortals, for the cause ye well discern,  
 With unlike wings are fledge. A mortal, I  
 Experience inequality like this ;  
 And therefore give no thanks, but in the heart,  
 For thy paternal greeting. This howe'er  
 I pray thee, living topaz ! that ingemm'st  
 This precious jewel ; let me hear thy name."

<sup>1</sup> *Unity.*] Πάντων ἄρα τὸ ἐν πρῶτον γίνεται τῶν ἀριθμῶν ἐχόντων. Plato, Parmenides. Ed. Bip. vol. x. p. 130. Perhaps the mention of Parmenides in the last Canto but one, suggested this thought to Dante, which he has expressed by specifying two particular numbers intended to stand for all. <sup>2</sup> *To each among your tribe.*] "In you, glorified spirits, love and knowledge are made equal, because they are equal in God. But with us mortals it is otherwise, for we have often the will without the means of expressing our affections ; and I can therefore thank thee only in my heart."



" I am thy root,<sup>1</sup> O leaf ! whom to expect  
Even, hath pleased me." Thus the prompt reply  
Prefacing, next it added : " He, of whom<sup>2</sup>  
Thy kindred appellation comes and who,  
These hundred years and more, on its first ledge  
Hath circuited the mountain, was my son,  
And thy great-grandsire. Well befits, his long  
Endurance should be shorten'd by thy deeds.

" Florence,<sup>3</sup> within her ancient limit-mark,  
Which calls her still<sup>4</sup> to matin prayers and noon,  
Was chaste and sober, and abode in peace.  
She had no armlets and no head-tires then ;  
No purfled dames ; no zone, that caught the eye  
More than the person did. Time was not yet,  
When<sup>5</sup> at his daughter's birth the sire grew pale,  
For fear the age and dowry should exceed,  
On each side, just proportion. House was none  
Void<sup>6</sup> of its family : nor yet had come  
Sardanapalus,<sup>7</sup> to exhibit feats  
Of chamber prowess. Montemalo<sup>8</sup> yet  
O'er our suburban turret<sup>9</sup> rose ; as much  
To be surpast in fall, as in its rising.  
I saw Bellincion Berti<sup>10</sup> walk abroad  
In leathern girdle, and a clasp of bone ;  
And, with no artful colouring on her cheeks,  
His lady leave the glass. The sons I saw

<sup>1</sup> *I am thy root.*] Cacciaguida, father to Alighieri of whom our Poet was the great-grandson. <sup>2</sup> *He, of whom.*] " Thy great-grandfather, Alighieri, has been in the first round of Purgatory more than a hundred years ; and it is fit that thou by thy good deserts shouldst endeavour to shorten the time of his remaining there." For what is known of Alighieri, see Pelli, *Memor. Opere di Dante*. Ediz. Zatta, 1758, tom. iv. P. 2<sup>da</sup>. p. 21. His son Bellincione was living in 1266 ; and of him was born the father of our Poet, whom Benvenuto da Imola calls a lawyer by profession. Pelli, *ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Florence.*] See G. Villani, lib. iii. cap. ii. <sup>4</sup> *Which calls her still.*] The public clock being still within the circuit of the ancient walls. <sup>5</sup> *When.*] When the women were not married at too early an age, and did not expect too large a portion. <sup>6</sup> *Void.*] Through the civil wars and banishments. <sup>7</sup> *Sardanapalus.*] The luxurious monarch of Assyria. Juvenal is here imitated, who uses his name for an instance of effeminacy. Sat. x. 362. <sup>8</sup> *Montemalo.*] An elevated spot between Rome and Viterbo. <sup>9</sup> *Our suburban turret.*] Uccellatojo, near Florence, from whence that city was discovered. <sup>10</sup> *Bellincion Berti.*] Inf., Canto xvi. 38, and Notes.

Of Nerli, and of Vecchio,<sup>1</sup> well content  
With unrobed jerkin ; and their good dames hand-  
ling

The spindle and the flax : O happy they !  
Each <sup>2</sup> sure of burial in her native land,  
And none left desolate a-bed for France.  
One waked to tend the cradle, hushing it  
With sounds that lull'd the parent's infancy :  
Another, with her maidens, drawing off  
The tresses from the distaff, lectured them  
Old tales of Troy, and Fesole, and Rome.  
A Salterello and Cianghella <sup>3</sup> we  
Had held as strange a marvel, as ye would  
A Cincinnatus or Cornelia now.

“ In such composed and seemly fellowship,  
Such faithful and such fair equality,  
In so sweet household, Mary <sup>4</sup> at my birth  
Bestow'd me, call'd on with loud cries ; and there,  
In your old baptistery, I was made  
Christian at once and Cacciaguida ; as were  
My brethren Eliseo and Moronto.

“ From Valdipado <sup>5</sup> came to me my spouse ;  
And hence thy surname grew. I follow'd then  
The Emperor Conrad : <sup>6</sup> and his knighthood he  
Did gird on me ; in such good part he took  
My valiant service. After him I went  
To testify against that evil law,  
Whose people,<sup>7</sup> by the shepherd's fault, possess  
Your right usurp'd. There I by that foul crew

<sup>1</sup> *Of Nerli, and of Vecchio.*] Two of the most opulent families in Florence. <sup>2</sup> *Each.*] “None fearful either of dying in banishment, or of being deserted by her husband on a scheme of traffic in France.”

<sup>3</sup> *A Salterello and Cianghella.*] The latter a shameless woman of the family of Tosa, married to Lito degli Alidosi of Imola : the former Lapo Salterello, a lawyer, with whom Dante was at variance. “We should have held an abandoned character, like these, as great a wonder, as ye would the contrary now.” <sup>4</sup> *Mary.*] The Virgin was invoked in the pains of child-birth. Purgatorio, Canto xx. 21. <sup>5</sup> *Valdipado.*] Cacciaguida's wife, whose family name was Alighieri, came from Ferrara, called Val di Pado, from its being watered by the Po.

<sup>6</sup> *Conrad.*] The Emperor Conrad III. who died in 1152. See G. Villani, lib. iv. xxxiv. <sup>7</sup> *Whose people.*] The Mahometans, who were left in possession of the Holy Land, through the supineness of the Pope.

See Canto ix. 123.

Was disentangled from the treacherous world  
 Whose base affection many a spirit soils ;  
 And from the martyrdom came to this peace."

## CANTO XVI

## ARGUMENT

Cacciaguida relates the time of his birth ; and, describing the extent of Florence when he lived there, recounts the names of the chief families who then inhabited it. Its degeneracy, and subsequent disgrace, he attributes to the introduction of families from the neighbouring country and villages, and to their mixture with the primitive citizens.

O SLIGHT respect of man's nobility !  
 I never shall account it marvellous,  
 That our infirm affection here below  
 Thou movest to boasting ; when I could not choose,  
 E'en in that region of unwarp'd desire,  
 In heaven itself, but make my vaunt in thee.  
 Yet cloak thou art soon shorten'd ; for that Time,  
 Unless thou be eked out from day to day,  
 Goes round thee with his shears. Resuming then,  
 With greeting <sup>1</sup> such as Rome was first to bear,  
 But since hath disaccustom'd, I began :  
 And Beatrice,<sup>2</sup> that a little space  
 Was sever'd, smiled ; reminding me of her,  
 Whose cough embolden'd (as the story holds)  
 To first offence the doubting Guenever.<sup>3</sup>

" You are my sire," said I : " you give me heart  
 Freely to speak my thought : above myself

<sup>1</sup> *With greeting.*] The Poet, who had addressed the spirit, not knowing him to be his ancestor, with a plain "Thou," now uses more ceremony, and calls him "You," according to a custom introduced among the Romans in the latter times of the empire.

<sup>2</sup> *Beatrice.*] Lombardi observes, that in order to show us that his conversation with Cacciaguida had no connexion with sacred subjects, Beatrice is described as standing at a little distance ; and her smiling at his formal address to his ancestor, makes him fall into a greater freedom of manner. See the next Canto, v. 15. <sup>3</sup> *Guenever.*] Beatrice's smile reminded him of the female servant who, by her coughing, emboldened Queen Guenever to admit the freedoms of Lancelot. See *Inf.*, Canto v. 124.

You raise me. Through so many streams with joy  
 My soul is fill'd, that gladness wells from it ;  
 So that it bears the mighty tide, and bursts not.  
 Say then, my honour'd stem ! what ancestors  
 Were those you sprang from, and what years were  
 mark'd

In your first childhood ? Tell me of the fold,<sup>1</sup>  
 That hath Saint John for guardian, what was then  
 Its state, and who in it were highest seated ! ”

As embers, at the breathing of the wind,  
 Their flame enliven ; so that light I saw  
 Shine at my blandishments ; and, as it grew  
 More fair to look on, so with voice more sweet,  
 Yet not in this our modern phrase, forthwith  
 It answer'd : “ From the day,<sup>2</sup> when it was said  
 ‘ Hail Virgin ! ’ to the throes by which my mother,  
 Who now is sainted, lighten’d her of me  
 Whom she was heavy with, this fire had come  
 Five hundred times and fourscore, to relume  
 Its radiance underneath the burning foot  
 Of its own lion. They, of whom I sprang,  
 And I, had there our birth-place, where the last<sup>3</sup>  
 Partition of our city first is reach’d  
 By him that runs her annual game. Thus much  
 Suffice of my forefathers : who they were,  
 And whence they hither came, more honourable  
 It is to pass in silence than to tell.  
 All those, who at that time were there, betwixt

<sup>1</sup> *The fold.*] Florence, of which John the Baptist was the patron saint.

<sup>2</sup> *From the day.*] From the incarnation of our Lord to the birth of Cacciaguida, the planet Mars had returned five hundred and eighty times to the constellation of Leo, with which it is supposed to have a congenial influence. As Mars then completes his revolution in a period forty-three days short of two years, Cacciaguida was born about 1090. This is Lombardi’s computation, and it squares well both with the old reading—

—————cinquecento cinquanta

E trenta fiate ;

and with the time when Cacciaguida might have fallen fighting under Conrad III. who died in 1152. <sup>3</sup> *The last.*] The city was divided into four compartments. The Elisei, the ancestors of Dante, resided near the entrance of that, named from the Porta S. Piero, which was the last reached by the competitor in the annual race at Florence. See G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. x.

Mars <sup>1</sup> and the Baptist, fit to carry arms,  
 Were but the fifth, of them this day alive.  
 But then the citizen's blood, that now is mix'd  
 From Campi and Certaldo and Fighine,<sup>2</sup>  
 Ran purely through the last mechanic's veins.  
 O how much better were it, that these people <sup>3</sup>  
 Were neighbours to you ; and that at Galluzzo  
 And at Trespiano ye should have your boundary ;  
 Than to have them within, and bear the stench  
 Of Aguglione's hind, and Signa's,<sup>4</sup> him,  
 That hath his eye already keen for bartering.<sup>5</sup>  
 Had not the people,<sup>6</sup> which of all the world  
 Degenerates most, been stepdame unto Cæsar,  
 But, as a mother to her son been kind,  
 Such one, as hath become a Florentine,  
 And trades and traffics, had been turn'd adrift  
 To Simifonte,<sup>7</sup> where his grandsire plied  
 The beggar's craft : the Conti were possest  
 Of Montemurlo <sup>8</sup> still : the Cerchi still  
 Were in Acone's parish : nor had haply  
 From Valdigueve past the Buondelmonti.  
 The city's malady hath ever source  
 In the confusion of its persons, as  
 The body's, in variety of food :  
 And the blind bull falls with a steeper plunge,  
 Than the blind lamb : and oftentimes one sword  
 Doth more and better execution,

<sup>1</sup> Mars] Editor's note : Between the statue of Mars on the Ponte Vecchio and the Baptistry of St. John there lived in those days but one-fifth of the present population. <sup>2</sup> Campi and Certaldo and Fighine.] Country places near Florence. <sup>3</sup> That these people.] "That the inhabitants of the above-mentioned places had not been mixed with the citizens ; nor the limits of Florence extended beyond Galluzzo and Trespiano." <sup>4</sup> Aguglione's hind, and Signa's.] Baldo of Aguglione, and Bonifazio of Signa. <sup>5</sup> His eye already keen for bartering.] See Inf., Canto xxi. 40, and note. <sup>6</sup> Had not the people.] If Rome had continued in her allegiance to the emperor, and the Guelph and Ghibelline factions had thus been prevented ; Florence would not have been polluted by a race of upstarts, nor lost the most respectable of her ancient families. <sup>7</sup> Simifonte.] A castle dismantled by the Florentines. G. Villani, lib. v. cap. xxx. The person here alluded to is no longer known. <sup>8</sup> Montemurlo.] G. Villani, lib. v. cap. xxxi., relates that the Conti Guidi, not being able to defend their castle from the Pistoians, sold it to the state of Florence.

Than five. Mark Luni ; Urbisaglia <sup>1</sup> mark ;  
 How they are gone ; and after them how go  
 Chiusi and Sinigaglia : <sup>2</sup> and 't will seem  
 No longer new, or strange to thee, to hear  
 That families fail, when cities have their end.  
 All things that appertain to ye, like yourselves,  
 Are mortal : but mortality in some  
 Ye mark not ; they endure so long, and you  
 Pass by so suddenly. And as the moon  
 Doth, by the rolling of her heavenly sphere,  
 Hide and reveal the strand unceasingly ;  
 So fortune deals with Florence. Hence admire not  
 At what of them I tell thee, whose renown  
 Time covers, the first Florentines. I saw  
 The Ughi, <sup>3</sup> Catilini, and Filippi,  
 The Alberichi, Greci, and Ormanni,  
 Now in their wane, illustrious citizens ;  
 And great as ancient, of Sannella him,  
 With him of Arca saw, and Soldanieri,  
 And Ardinghi, and Bostichi. At the poop <sup>4</sup>  
 That now is laden with new felony  
 So cumbrous it may speedily sink the bark,  
 The Ravignani sat, of whom is sprung  
 The County Guido, and whoso hath since  
 His title from the famed Bellincion ta'en.  
 Fair governance was yet an art well prized  
 By him of Pressa : Galigaio show'd  
 The gilded hilt and pommel, <sup>5</sup> in his house :  
 The column, clothed with verrey, <sup>6</sup> still was seen  
 Unshaken ; the Sacchetti still were great,  
 Giuochi, Sifanti, Galli, and Barucci,  
 With them <sup>7</sup> who blush to hear the bushel named.

<sup>1</sup> *Luni ; Urbisaglia.*] Cities formerly of importance, but then fallen to decay. <sup>2</sup> *Chiusi and Sinigaglia.*] The same. <sup>3</sup> *The Ughi.*] Whoever is curious to know the habitations of these and the other ancient Florentines, may consult G. Villani, lib. iv. <sup>4</sup> *At the poop.*] The Cerchi, Dante's enemies, had succeeded to the houses over the gate of St. Peter, formerly inhabited by the Ravignani and Count Guido. G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. x. Many editions read *porta*, "gate."  
<sup>5</sup> *The gilded hilt and pommel.*] The symbols of knighthood. <sup>6</sup> *The column, clothed with verrey.*] The arms of the Pigli. <sup>7</sup> *With them.*] Either the Chiaramontesi, or the Tosinghi ; one of which had com-



Of the Calfucci still the branchy trunk  
 Was in its strength : and, to the curule chairs,  
 Sizii and Arrigucci <sup>1</sup> yet were drawn.  
 How mighty them <sup>2</sup> I saw, whom, since, their pride  
 Hath undone ! And in all their goodly deeds  
 Florence was, by the bullets of bright gold,<sup>3</sup>  
 O'erflourish'd. Such the sires of those,<sup>4</sup> who now,  
 As surely as your church is vacant, flock  
 Into her consistory, and at leisure  
 There stall them and grow fat. The o'erweening  
 brood,<sup>5</sup>  
 That plays the dragon after him that flees,  
 But unto such as turn and show the tooth,  
 Ay or the purse, is gentle as a lamb,  
 Was on its rise, but yet so slight esteem'd,  
 That Ubertino of Donati grudged  
 His father-in-law should yoke him to its tribe.  
 Already Caponsacco <sup>6</sup> had descended  
 Into the mart from Fesole : and Giuda  
 And Infangato <sup>7</sup> were good citizens.  
 A thing incredible I tell, though true.  
 The gateway,<sup>8</sup> named from those of Pera, led  
 Into the narrow circuit of your walls.

mitted a fraud in measuring out the wheat from the public granary.  
 See *Purgatorio*, Canto xii. 99.

<sup>1</sup> *Sizii and Arrigucci.*] "These families still obtained the magistracies." <sup>2</sup> *Them.*] The Uberti ; according to the Latin note on the Monte Cassino MS., with which the editor of the extracts from those notes says that Benvenuto agrees. <sup>3</sup> *The bullets of bright gold.*]

The arms of the Abbati, as it is conjectured ; or of the Lamberti, according to the authorities referred to in the last note. <sup>4</sup> *The sires of those.*] "Of the Visdomini, the Tosinghi, and the Cortigiani, who, being sprung from the founders of the bishopric of Florence, are the curators of its revenues, which they do not spare, whenever it becomes vacant."

<sup>5</sup> *The o'erweening brood.*] The Adimari. This family was so little esteemed, that Ubertino Donato, who had married a daughter of Bellincion Berti, himself indeed derived from the same stock (see note to Inf., Canto xvi. 38), was offended with his father-in-law, for giving another of his daughters in marriage to one of them. <sup>6</sup> *Caponsacco.*] The family of Caponsacchi, who had removed from Fesole, lived at Florence in the Mercato Vecchio.

<sup>7</sup> ——— *Giuda*

*And Infangato.*] Giuda Guidi and the family of Infangati.

<sup>8</sup> *The gateway.*] Landino refers this to the smallness of the city : Vellutello, with less probability, to the simplicity of the people in naming one of the gates after a private family.

Each one, who bears the sightly quarterings  
 Of the great Baron <sup>1</sup> (he whose name and worth  
 The festival of Thomas still revives),  
 His knighthood and his privilege retain'd ;  
 Albeit one, <sup>2</sup> who borders them with gold,  
 This day is mingled with the common herd.  
 In Borgo yet the Gualterotti dwelt,  
 And Importuni : <sup>3</sup> well for its repose,  
 Had it still lack'd of newer neighbourhood. <sup>4</sup>  
 The house, <sup>5</sup> from whence your tears have had their  
                   spring,  
 Through the just anger, that hath murder'd ye  
 And put a period to your gladsome days,  
 Was honour'd ; it, and those consorted with it.  
 O Buondelmonti ! what ill counseling  
 Prevail'd on thee to break the plight'd bond ?  
 Many, who now are weeping, would rejoice,  
 Had God to Ema <sup>6</sup> given thee, the first time  
 Thou near our city camest. But so was doom'd :  
 Florence ! on that maim'd stone <sup>7</sup> which guards the  
                   bridge,

<sup>1</sup> *The great Baron.*] The Marchese Ugo, who resided at Florence as lieutenant of the Emperor Otho III., gave many of the chief families licence to bear his arms. See G. Villani, lib. iv. cap. ii., where the vision is related, in consequence of which he sold all his possessions in Germany, and founded seven abbeys ; in one whereof, his memory was celebrated at Florence on St. Thomas's day. "The marquis, when hunting, strayed away from his people, and wandering through a forest, came to a smithy, where he saw black and deformed men tormenting others with fire and hammers ; and, asking the meaning of this, he was told that they were condemned souls, who suffered this punishment, and that the soul of the Marquis Ugo was doomed to suffer the same, if he did not repent. Struck with horror, he commended himself to the Virgin Mary ; and soon after founded the seven religious houses." <sup>2</sup> *One.*] Giano della Bella, belonging to one of the families thus distinguished, who no longer retained his place among the nobility, and had yet added to his arms a bordure or. See Macchiavelli, 1st. Fior. lib. ii. p. 86. Ediz. Giolito.

<sup>3</sup> ——— *Gualterotti dwelt,*

*And Importuni.*] Two families in the compartment of the city called Borgo. <sup>4</sup> *Newer neighbourhood.*] Some understand this of the Bardi ; and others, of the Buondelmonti. <sup>5</sup> *The house.*] Of *Amidei.*] See notes to Canto xxviii. of *Inf.*, 102. <sup>6</sup> *To Ema.*] "It had been well for the city, if thy ancestor had been drowned in the Ema, when he crossed that stream on his way from Montebuono to Florence." <sup>7</sup> *On that maim'd stone.*] See *Inf.*, Canto xiii. 144. Near the remains of the statue of Mars, Buondelmonti was slain, as if

The victim, when thy peace departed, fell.

“ With these and others like to them, I saw  
Florence in such assured tranquillity,  
She had no cause at which to grieve : with these  
Saw her so glorious and so just, that ne’er  
The lily <sup>1</sup> from the lance had hung reverse,  
Or through division been with vermeil dyed.”

## CANTO XVII

### ARGUMENT

Cacciaguida predicts to our Poet his exile and the calamities he had to suffer ; and, lastly, exhorts him to write the present poem.

SUCH as the youth,<sup>2</sup> who came to Clymene,  
To certify himself of that reproach  
Which had been fasten’d on him (he whose end,  
Still makes the fathers chary to their sons),  
E’en such was I ; nor unobserved was such  
Of Beatrice, and that saintly lamp,<sup>3</sup>  
Who had erewhile for me his station moved ;  
When thus my lady : “ Give thy wish free vent,  
That it may issue, bearing true report  
Of the mind’s impress : not that aught thy words  
May to our knowledge add, but to the end  
That thou mayst use thyself to own thy thirst,<sup>4</sup>  
And men may mingle for thee when they hear.”  
“ O plant, from whence I spring ! revered and loved !  
Who soar’st so high a pitch, that thou as clear,<sup>5</sup>

he had been a victim to the god ; and Florence had not since known the blessing of peace.

<sup>1</sup> *The lily.*] “ The arms of Florence had never hung reversed on the spear of her enemies, in token of her defeat ; nor been changed from argent to gules ” ; as they afterwards were, when the Guelſi gained the predominance. <sup>2</sup> *The youth.*] Phaeton, who came to his mother

Clymene, to inquire of her if he were indeed the son of Apollo. See Ovid. *Metam.* lib. i. ad finem. <sup>3</sup> *That saintly lamp.*] Cacciaguida.

<sup>4</sup> *To own thy thirst.*] “ That thou mayst obtain from others a solution of any doubt that may occur to thee.” <sup>5</sup> *That thou as clear.*] “ Thou beholdest future events with the same clearness of evidence that we discern the simplest mathematical demonstrations.”

As earthly thought determines two obtuse  
 In one triangle not contain'd, so clear  
 Dost see contingencies, ere in themselves  
 Existent, looking at the point <sup>1</sup> whereto  
 All times are present ; I, the whilst I scaled  
 With Virgil the soul-purifying mount <sup>2</sup>  
 And visited the nether world <sup>3</sup> of woe,  
 Touching my future destiny have heard  
 Words grievous, though I feel me on all sides  
 Well squared to fortune's blows. Therefore my will  
 Were satisfied to know the lot awaits me.  
 The arrow, seen beforehand, slacks his flight."

So said I to the brightness, which erewhile  
 To me had spoken ; and my will declared,  
 As Beatrice will'd, explicitly.  
 Nor with oracular response obscure,  
 Such as, or e'er the Lamb of God was slain,  
 Beguiled the credulous nations : but, in terms  
 Precise, and unambiguous lore, replied  
 The spirt of paternal love, enshrined,  
 Yet in his smile apparent ; and thus spake :  
 " Contingency, whose verge extendeth not  
 Beyond the tablet of your mortal mold,  
 Is all depicted in the eternal sight ;  
 But hence deriveth not necessity, <sup>4</sup>  
 More than the tall ship, hurried down the flood,  
 Is driven by the eye that looks on it.  
 From thence, <sup>5</sup> as to the ear sweet harmony  
 From organ comes, so comes before mine eye  
 The time prepared for thee. Such as driven out  
 From Athens, by his cruel stepdame's <sup>6</sup> wiles,  
 Hippolytus departed ; such must thou  
 Depart from Florence. This they wish, and this

<sup>1</sup> *The point.*] The divine nature.    <sup>2</sup> *The soul-purifying mount.*] See Purg. Canto viii. 133, and Canto xi. 140.    <sup>3</sup> *The nether world.*] See Inf., Canto x. 77, and Canto xv. 61.    <sup>4</sup> *Necessity.*] "The evidence with which we see casual events portrayed in the source of all truth, no more necessitates those events, than does the image, reflected in the sight by a ship sailing down a stream, necessitate the motion of the vessel."    <sup>5</sup> *From thence.*] "From the eternal sight ; the view of the Deity Himself."    <sup>6</sup> *His cruel stepdame.*] Phædra.

Contrive, and will ere long effectuate, there,<sup>1</sup>  
 Where gainful merchandize is made of Christ  
 Throughout the live-long day. The common cry,<sup>2</sup>  
 Will, as 'tis ever wont, affix the blame  
 Unto the party injured : but the truth  
 Shall, in the vengeance it dispenseth, find  
 A faithful witness. Thou shalt leave each thing  
 Beloved most dearly : this is the first shaft  
 Shot from the bow of exile. Thou shalt prove  
 How salt the savour is of other's bread ;  
 How hard the passage, to descend and climb  
 By other's stairs. But that shall gall thee most,  
 Will be the worthless and vile company,  
 With whom thou must be thrown into these straits.  
 For all ungrateful, impious all, and mad,  
 Shall turn 'gainst thee : but in a little while,  
 Theirs,<sup>3</sup> and not thine, shall be the crimson'd brow,  
 Their course shall so evince their brutishness,  
 To have ta'en thy stand apart shall well become thee.

“ First refuge thou must find, first place of rest,  
 In the great Lombard's<sup>4</sup> courtesy, who bears,  
 Upon the ladder perch'd, the sacred bird.  
 He shall behold thee with such kind regard,  
 That 'twixt ye two, the contrary to that  
 Which 'falls 'twixt other men, the granting shall  
 Forerun the asking. With him shalt thou see  
 That mortal,<sup>5</sup> who was at his birth imprest  
 So strongly from this star, that of his deeds  
 The nations shall take note. His unripe age  
 Yet holds him from observance ; for these wheels

<sup>1</sup> *There.*] At Rome, where the expulsion of Dante's party from Florence was then plotting, in 1300.    <sup>2</sup> *The common cry.*] The multitude will, as usual, be ready to blame those who are sufferers, whose cause will at last be vindicated by the overthrow of their enemies.  
<sup>3</sup> *Theirs.*] “ They shall be ashamed of the part they have taken against thee.”    <sup>4</sup> *The great Lombard.*] Either Bartolommeo della Scala ; or Alboino his brother, although our Poet has spoken ambiguously of him in his *Convito*, p. 179. Their coat of arms was a ladder and an eagle. For an account of the rise of this family from a very mean condition, see G. Villani, lib. xi. cap. xciv.    <sup>5</sup> *That mortal.*] Can Grande della Scala, born under the influence of Mars, but at this time only nine years old. He was, as the other two, a son of Alberto della Scala.

Only nine years have compast him about.  
 But, ere the Gascon <sup>1</sup> practise on great Harry,<sup>2</sup>  
 Sparkles of virtue shall shoot forth in him,  
 In equal scorn <sup>3</sup> of labours and of gold.  
 His bounty shall be spread abroad so widely,  
 As not to let the tongues, e'en of his foes,  
 Be idle in its praise. Look thou to him,  
 And his beneficence : for he shall cause  
 Reversal of their lot to many people ;  
 Rich men and beggars interchanging fortunes.  
 And thou shalt bear this written in thy soul,  
 Of him, but tell it not " : and things he told  
 Incredible to those who witness them ;  
 Then added : " So interpret thou, my son,  
 What hath been told thee.—Lo ! the ambushment  
 That a few circling seasons hide for thee.  
 Yet envy not thy neighbours : time extends  
 Thy span beyond their treason's chastisement."

Soon as the saintly spirit, by silence, mark'd  
 Completion of that web, which I had stretch'd  
 Before it, warp'd for weaving ; I began,  
 As one, who in perplexity desires  
 Counsel of other, wise, benign, and friendly :  
 " My father ! well I mark how time spurs on  
 Toward me, ready to inflict the blow,  
 Which falls most heavily on him who most  
 Abandoneth himself. Therefore 'tis good  
 I should forecast, that, driven from the place <sup>4</sup>  
 Most dear to me, I may not lose myself <sup>5</sup>  
 All other by my song. Down through the world  
 Of infinite mourning ; and along the mount,  
 From whose fair height my lady's eyes did lift me ;  
 And, after, through this heaven, from light to light ;

<sup>1</sup> *The Gascon.*] Pope Clement v. See Inf., Canto xix. 86, and note, and Par. Canto xxvii. 53, and Canto xxx. 141. <sup>2</sup> *Great Harry.*] The Emperor Henry vii. See Canto xxx. 135. <sup>3</sup> *In equal scorn.*] See Inf., Canto i. 98. <sup>4</sup> *The place.*] Our Poet here discovers both that Florence, much as he inveighs against it, was still the dearest object of his affections, and that it was not without some scruple he indulged his satirical vein. <sup>5</sup> *I may not lose myself.*] "That being driven out of my country, I may not deprive myself of every other place by the boldness, with which I expose in my writings the vices of mankind."



Have I learnt that, which if I tell again,  
 It may with many woefully disrelish :  
 And, if I am a timid friend to truth,  
 I fear my life may perish among those,  
 To whom these days shall be of ancient date."

The brightness, where enclosed the treasure <sup>1</sup>  
 smiled,  
 Which I had found there, first shone glisteningly,  
 Like to a golden mirror in the sun ;  
 Next answer'd : " Conscience, dimm'd or by its own  
 Or other's shame, will feel thy saying sharp.  
 Thou, notwithstanding, all deceit removed,  
 See the whole vision be made manifest.  
 And let them wince, who have their withers wrung.  
 What though, when tasted first, thy voice shall prove  
 Unwelcome : on digestion, it will turn  
 To vital nourishment. The cry thou raisest,<sup>2</sup>  
 Shall, as the wind doth, smite the proudest summits ;  
 Which is of honour no light argument.  
 For this, there only have been shown to thee,  
 Throughout these orbs, the mountain, and the deep,  
 Spirits, whom fame hath note of. For the mind  
 Of him, who hears, is loth to acquiesce  
 And fix its faith, unless the instance brought  
 Be palpable, and proof apparent urge."

<sup>1</sup> *The treasure.*] Cacciaguida.    <sup>2</sup> *The cry thou raisest.*] "Thou shalt stigmatize the faults of those who are most eminent and powerful ; for men are naturally less moved by instances, adduced from among those who are in the lower classes of life."

## CANTO XVIII

## ARGUMENT

Dante sees the souls of many renowned warriors and crusaders in the planet Mars; and then ascends with Beatrice to Jupiter, the sixth heaven, in which he finds the souls of those who had administered justice rightly in the world, so disposed, as to form the figure of an eagle. The Canto concludes with an invective against the avarice of the clergy, and especially of the pope.

Now <sup>1</sup> in his word, sole, ruminating, joy'd  
That blessed spirit: and I fed on mine,  
Tempering the sweet with bitter. She meanwhile,  
Who led me unto God, admonish'd: "Muse  
On other thoughts: bethink thee, that near Him  
I dwell, who recompenseth every wrong."

At the sweet sounds of comfort straight I turn'd;  
And, in the saintly eyes what love was seen,  
I leave in silence here, nor through distrust  
Of my words only, but that to such bliss  
The mind remounts not without aid. Thus much  
Yet may I speak; that, as I gazed on her,  
Affection found no room for other wish.  
While the everlasting pleasure, that did full  
On Beatrice shine, with second view  
From her fair countenance my gladden'd soul  
Contented; vanquishing me with a beam  
Of her soft smile, she spake: "Turn thee, and list.  
These eyes are not thy only Paradise."

As here, we sometimes in the looks may see  
The affection mark'd, when that its sway hath ta'en  
The spirit wholly; thus the hallow'd light,<sup>2</sup>  
To whom I turn'd, flashing, bewray'd its will  
To talk yet further with me, and began:  
"On this fifth lodgment of the tree,<sup>3</sup> whose life  
Is from its top, whose fruit is ever fair

<sup>1</sup> Now.] The spirit of Cacciaguida enjoyed its own thoughts in silence. <sup>2</sup> The hallow'd light.] In which the spirit of Cacciaguida was enclosed. <sup>3</sup> On this fifth lodgment of the tree.] Mars, the fifth of the heavens.

And leaf unwithering, blessed spirits abide,  
 That were below, ere they arrived in heaven,  
 So mighty in renown, as every muse  
 Might grace her triumph with them. On the horns  
 Look, therefore, of the cross : he whom I name,  
 Shall there enact, as doth in summer cloud  
 Its nimble fire." Along the cross I saw,  
 At the repeated name of Joshua,  
 A splendour gliding ; nor, the word was said,  
 Ere it was done : then, at the naming, saw,  
 Of the great Maccabee,<sup>1</sup> another move  
 With whirling speed ; and gladness was the scourge  
 Unto that top. The next for Charlemain  
 And for the peer Orlando, two my gaze  
 Pursued, intently, as the eye pursues  
 A falcon flying. Last, along the cross,  
 William, and Renard,<sup>2</sup> and Duke Godfrey<sup>3</sup> drew  
 My ken, and Robert Guiscard.<sup>4</sup> And the soul  
 Who spake with me, among the other lights  
 Did move away, and mix ; and with the quire  
 Of heavenly songsters proved his tuneful skill.

To Beatrice on my right I bent,  
 Looking for intimation, or by word  
 Or act, what next behoved ; and did descry  
 Such mere effulgence in her eyes, such joy,  
 It pass'd all former wont. And, as by sense  
 Of new delight, the man, who perseveres  
 In good deeds, doth perceive, from day to day,  
 His virtue growing ; I e'en thus perceived,  
 Of my ascent, together with the heaven,  
 The circuit widen'd ; noting the increase  
 Of beauty in that wonder. Like the change

<sup>1</sup> *The great Maccabee.*] Judas Maccabeus.      <sup>2</sup> *William, and Renard.*] Probably, not, as the commentators have imagined, William II. of Orange, and his kinsman Raimbaud, two of the crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillon (Mainbourg, *Hist. des Croisades*, ed. Par. 1682, 12mo, tom. i. p. 96), but rather the two more celebrated heroes in the age of Charlemagne. The former, William I. of Orange, supposed to have been the founder of the present illustrious family of that name, died about 808, according to Joseph de la Pise, *Tableau de l'Hist. des Princes et Principauté d' Orange*.      <sup>3</sup> *Duke Godfrey.*] Godfrey of Bouillon.      <sup>4</sup> *Robert Guiscard.*] See Inf., Canto xxviii. 12.

In a brief moment on some maiden's cheek,  
 Which, from its fairness, doth discharge the weight  
 Of pudency, that stain'd it ; such in her,  
 And to mine eyes so sudden was the change,  
 Through silvery <sup>1</sup> whiteness of that temperate star  
 Whose sixth orb now enfolded us. I saw,  
 Within that Jovial cresset, the clear sparks  
 Of love, that reign'd there, fashion to my view  
 Our language. And as birds, from river banks  
 Arisen, now in round, now lengthen'd troop,  
 Array them in their flight, greeting, as seems,  
 Their new-found pastures ; so, within the lights,  
 The saintly creatures flying, sang ; and made  
 Now D, now I, now L, figured i' the air.  
 First singing to their notes they moved ; then, one  
 Becoming of these signs, a little while  
 Did rest them, and were mute. O nymph divine <sup>2</sup>  
 Of Pegasean race ! who souls, which thou  
 Inspirest, makest glorious and long-lived, as they  
 Cities and realms by thee ; thou with thyself  
 Inform me ; that I may set forth the shapes,  
 As fancy doth present them : be thy power  
 Display'd in this brief song. The characters, <sup>3</sup>  
 Vocal and consonant, were five-fold seven.  
 In order, each, as they appear'd, I mark'd  
 Diligite Justitiam, the first,  
 Both verb and noun all blazon'd ; and the extreme,  
 Qui judicatis terram. In the M  
 Of the fifth word they held their station ;  
 Making the star seem silver streak'd with gold.

<sup>1</sup> *Through silvery.*] So in the Convito, "E'l ciel di Giove, &c.," p. 74.  
 "The heaven of Jupiter may be compared to geometry, for two properties : the one is, that it moves between two heavens repugnant to its temperature, as that of Mars and that of Saturn ; whence Ptolemy, in the above-cited book, says that Jupiter is a star of temperate complexion, between the coldness of Saturn and the heat of Mars : the other is, that, among all the stars, it shows itself white, as it were silvered."  
<sup>2</sup> *O nymph divine.*] "O muse, thou that makest thy votaries glorious and long-lived, as they, assisted by thee, make glorious and long-lived the cities and realms which they celebrate, now enlighten me, &c."  
<sup>3</sup> *The characters.*] Diligite justitiam qui judicatis terram. "Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth."  
 Wisdom of Solomon, c. i. r.

And on the summit of the M, I saw  
 Descending other lights, that rested there,  
 Singing, methinks, their bliss and primal good.  
 Then, as at shaking of a lighted brand,  
 Sparkles innumerable on all sides  
 Rise scatter'd, source of augury to the unwise ; <sup>1</sup>  
 Thus more than thousand twinkling lustres hence  
 Seem'd reascending ; and a higher pitch  
 Some mounting, and some less, e'en as the sun,  
 Which kindleth them, decreed. And when each one  
 Had settled in his place ; the head and neck  
 Then saw I of an eagle, livelily  
 Graved in that streaky fire. Who painteth there <sup>2</sup>  
 Hath none to guide Him : of Himself He guides :  
 And every line and texture of the nest  
 Doth own from Him the virtue fashions it.  
 The other bright beatitude, <sup>3</sup> that seem'd  
 Erewhile, with lili'd crowning, well content  
 To over-canopy the M, moved forth,  
 Following gently the impress of the bird.

Sweet star ! what glorious and thick-studded gems  
 Declared to me our justice on the earth  
 To be the effluence of that heaven, which thou,  
 Thyself a costly jewel, dost inlay.  
 Therefore I pray the Sovran Mind, from whom  
 Thy motion and thy virtue are begun,  
 That He would look from whence the fog doth rise,  
 To vitiate thy beam ; so that once more <sup>4</sup>  
 He may put forth His hand 'gainst such, as drive  
 Their traffic in that sanctuary, whose walls  
 With miracles and martyrdoms were built.

Ye host of heaven, whose glory I survey !  
 O beg ye grace for those, that are, on earth,  
 All after ill example gone astray.  
 War once had for his instrument the sword :

<sup>1</sup> *The unwise.*] Who augur future riches to themselves in proportion to the quantity of sparks that fly from the lighted brand when it is shaken. <sup>2</sup> *Who painteth there.*] The Deity Himself. <sup>3</sup> *Beatitude.*] The band of spirits ; for "beatitudo" is here a noun of multitude. <sup>4</sup> *That once more.*] "That He may again drive out those who buy and sell in the temple."

But now 'tis made, taking the bread away,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which the good Father locks from none.—And thou,  
 That writest but to cancel,<sup>2</sup> think, that they,  
 Who for the vineyard, which thou wastest, died,  
 Peter and Paul, live yet, and mark thy doings.  
 Thou hast good cause to cry, “My heart so cleaves  
 To him,<sup>3</sup> that lived in solitude remote,  
 And for a dance was dragg'd to martyrdom,  
 I wist not of the fisherman nor Paul.”

## CANTO XIX

### ARGUMENT

The eagle speaks as with one voice proceeding from a multitude of spirits, that compose it; and declares the cause for which it is exalted to that state of glory. It then solves a doubt, which our Poet had entertained, respecting the possibility of salvation without belief in Christ; exposes the inefficacy of a mere profession of such belief; and prophesies the evil appearance that many Christian potentates will make at the day of judgment.

BEFORE my sight appear'd, with open wings,  
 The beauteous image; in fruition sweet,  
 Gladdening the thronged spirits. Each did seem  
 A little ruby, whereon so intense  
 The sunbeam glow'd, that to mine eyes it came  
 In clear refraction. And that, which next  
 Befalls me to portray, voice hath not utter'd,  
 Nor hath ink written, nor in fantasy  
 Was e'er conceived. For I beheld and heard  
 The beak discourse; and, what intention form'd  
 Of many, singly as of one express,  
 Beginning: “For that I was just and piteous,

<sup>1</sup> *Taking the bread away.*] “Excommunication, or interdiction of the Eucharist, is now employed as a weapon of warfare.” <sup>2</sup> *That writest but to cancel.*] “And thou, Pope Boniface, who writest thy ecclesiastical censures for no other purpose than to be paid for revoking them.” <sup>3</sup> *To him.*] The coin of Florence was stamped with the impression of John the Baptist; and, for this, the avaricious pope is made to declare that he felt more devotion, than either for Peter or Paul.



I am exalted to this height of glory,  
The which no wish exceeds : and there on earth  
Have I my memory left, e'en by the bad  
Commended, while they leave its course untrod."

Thus is one heat from many embers felt ;  
As in that image many were the loves,  
And one the voice, that issued from them all :  
Whence I address'd them : " O perennial flowers  
Of gladness everlasting ! that exhale  
In single breath your odours manifold ;  
Breathe now : and let the hunger be appeased,  
That with great craving long hath held my soul,  
Finding no food on earth. This well I know ;  
That if there be in heaven a realm, that shows  
In faithful mirror the celestial Justice,  
Yours without veil reflects it. Ye discern  
The heed, wherewith I do prepare myself  
To hearken ; ye, the doubt, that urges me  
With such inveterate craving." Straight I saw,  
Like to a falcon issuing from the hood,  
That rears his head, and claps him with his wings,  
His beauty and his eagerness bewraying ;  
So saw I move that stately sign, with praise  
Of grace divine inwoven, and high song  
Of inexpressive joy. " He," it began,  
" Who turn'd His compass <sup>1</sup> on the worlds extreme,  
And in that space so variously hath wrought,  
Both openly and in secret ; in such wise  
Could not, through all the universe, display  
Impression of His glory, that the Word <sup>2</sup>  
Of His omniscience should not still remain  
In infinite excess. In proof whereof,  
He first through pride supplanted, who was sum  
Of each created being, waited not  
For light celestial ; and abortive fell.

<sup>1</sup> *Who turn'd His compass.*] "When He prepared the heavens, I was there : when He set a compass upon the face of the depth." Prov. viii. 27. <sup>2</sup> *The Word.*] "The divine nature still remained incomprehensible. Of this Lucifer was a proof ; for he, though the chief of all created beings, yet, through his pride, waiting not for further supplies of the divine illumination, fell without coming to maturity."

Whence needs each lesser nature is but scant  
 Receptacle unto that Good, which knows  
 No limit, measured by itself alone.  
 Therefore your sight, of the omnipresent Mind  
 A single beam, its origin must own  
 Surpassing far its utmost potency.  
 The ken, your world is gifted with, descends  
 In the everlasting Justice as low down,  
 As eye doth in the sea ; which, though it mark  
 The bottom from the shore, in the wide main  
 Discerns it not ; and ne'ertheless it is ;  
 But hidden through its deepness. Light is none,  
 Save that which cometh from the pure serene  
 Of ne'er disturbed ether : for the rest,  
 'Tis darkness all ; or shadow of the flesh,  
 Or else its poison. Here confess reveal'd  
 That covert, which hath hidden from thy search  
 The living justice, of the which thou madest  
 Such frequent question ; for thou said'st—' A man  
 Is born on Indus' banks, and none is there  
 Who speaks of Christ, nor who doth read nor  
     write ;  
 And all his inclinations and his acts,  
 As far as human reason sees, are good ;  
 And he offendeth not in word or deed :  
 But unbaptized he dies, and void of faith.  
 Where is the justice that condemns him ? where  
 His blame, if he believeth not ? '—What then,  
 And who art thou, that on the stool wouldst sit  
 To judge at distance of a thousand miles  
 With the short-sighted vision of a span ?  
 To him,<sup>1</sup> who subtilizes thus with me,  
 There would assuredly be room for doubt  
 Even to wonder, did not the safe word  
 Of Scripture hold supreme authority.

“ O animals of clay ! O spirits gross !

<sup>1</sup> *To him.*] “ He, who should argue, on the words I have just used, respecting the fate of those who have wanted means of knowing the Gospel, would certainly have cause enough to doubt, if he did not defer to the authority of Scripture, which pronounces God to be thoroughly just.”

The primal will,<sup>1</sup> that in itself is good,  
 Hath from itself, the chief Good, ne'er been moved.  
 Justice consists in consonance with it,  
 Derivable by no created good,  
 Whose very cause depends upon its beam."

As on her nest the stork, that turns about  
 Unto her young, whom lately she hath fed,  
 Whiles they with upward eyes do look on her ;  
 So lifted I my gaze ; and, bending so,  
 The ever-blessed image waved its wings,  
 Labouring with such deep counsel. Wheeling round  
 It warbled, and did say : " As are my notes  
 To thee, who understand'st them not ; such is  
 The eternal judgment unto mortal ken."

Then still abiding in that ensign ranged,  
 Wherewith the Romans overawed the world,  
 Those burning splendours of the Holy Spirit  
 Took up the strain ; and thus it spake again :  
 " None ever hath ascended to this realm,  
 Who hath not a believer been in Christ,  
 Either before or after the blest limbs  
 Were nail'd upon the wood. But lo ! of those  
 Who call ' Christ, Christ,'<sup>2</sup> there shall be many found,  
 In judgment, further off from Him by far,  
 Than such to whom His name was never known.  
 Christians like these the Æthiop<sup>3</sup> shall condemn :  
 When that the two assemblages shall part ;  
 One rich eternally, the other poor.

" What may the Persians say unto your kings,  
 When they shall see that volume,<sup>4</sup> in the which  
 All their dispraise is written, spread to view ?  
 There amidst Albert's<sup>5</sup> works shall that be read,  
 Which will give speedy motion to the pen,

<sup>1</sup> *The primal will.*] The divine will.      <sup>2</sup> *Who call ' Christ, Christ.'*] " Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. vii. 21.      <sup>3</sup> *The Æthiop.*] " The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it." Matt. xii. 41.      <sup>4</sup> *That volume.*] " And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. xx. 12.      <sup>5</sup> *Albert.*] Purgatorio, Canto vi. 98.

When Prague <sup>1</sup> shall mourn her desolated realm.  
 There shall be read the woe, that he <sup>2</sup> doth work  
 With his adulterate money on the Seine,  
 Who by the tusk will perish : there be read  
 The thirsting pride, that maketh fool alike  
 The English and Scot, <sup>3</sup> impatient of their bound.  
 There shall be seen the Spaniard's luxury ; <sup>4</sup>  
 The delicate living there of the Bohemian, <sup>5</sup>  
 Who still to worth has been a willing stranger.  
 The halter of Jerusalem <sup>6</sup> shall see  
 A unit for his virtue ; for his vices,  
 No less a mark than million. He, <sup>7</sup> who guards  
 The isle of fire by old Anchises honour'd,  
 Shall find his avarice there and cowardice ;  
 And better to denote his littleness,  
 The writing must be letters maim'd, that speak  
 Much in a narrow space. All there shall know  
 His uncle <sup>8</sup> and his brother's <sup>9</sup> filthy doings,  
 Who so renown'd a nation and two crowns  
 Have bastardized. <sup>10</sup> And they, of Portugal <sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Prague.*] The eagle predicts the devastation of Bohemia by Albert, which happened soon after this time, when that emperor obtained the kingdom for his eldest son Rudolph. <sup>2</sup> *He.*] Philip iv. of France, after the battle of Courtrai, 1302, in which the French were defeated by the Flemings, raised the nominal value of the coin. This king died in consequence of his horse being thrown to the ground by a wild boar, in 1314. <sup>3</sup> *The English and Scot.*] He adverts to the disputes between John Baliol and Edward I., the latter of whom is commended in the Purgatorio, Canto vii. 130. <sup>4</sup> *The Spaniard's luxury.*] The commentators refer this to Alonzo x. of Spain. It seems probable that the allusion is to Ferdinand iv. who came to the crown in 1295, and died in 1312, at the age of twenty-four, in consequence, as it was supposed, of his extreme intemperance. <sup>5</sup> *The Bohemian.*] Wincelauus ii. Purgatorio, Canto vii. 99. <sup>6</sup> *The halter of Jerusalem.*] Charles II. of Naples and Jerusalem, who was lame. See note to Purgatorio, Canto vii. 122, and xx. 78. <sup>7</sup> *He.*] Frederick of Sicily, son of Peter III. of Arragon. Purgatorio, Canto vii. 117. The isle of fire is Sicily, where was the tomb of Anchises. <sup>8</sup> *His uncle.*] James, King of Majorca and Minorca, brother to Peter III. <sup>9</sup> *His brother.*] James II. of Arragon, who died in 1327. See Purgatorio, Canto vii. 117. <sup>10</sup> *Bastardized.*] "Bozze," according to Bembo, is a Provençal word for "bastardo e non legitimo." Della Volg. Lingua, lib. i. p. 25. Ediz. 1544. Others have understood it to mean, "one dishonoured by his wife." <sup>11</sup> *Of Portugal.*] In the time of Dante, Diniz was King of Portugal. He died in 1325, after a reign of nearly forty-six years, and does not seem to have deserved the stigma here fastened on him. Perhaps the rebellious son of Dionysius may be alluded to.

And Norway,<sup>1</sup> there shall be exposed, with him  
 Of Ratza,<sup>2</sup> who hath counterfeited ill  
 The coin of Venice. O blest Hungary !<sup>3</sup>  
 If thou no longer patiently abidest  
 Thy ill-entreating : and, O blest Navarre !<sup>4</sup>  
 If with thy mountainous girdle<sup>5</sup> thou wouldst arm  
     thee  
 In earnest of that day, e'en now are heard  
 Wailings and groans in Famagosta's streets  
 And Nicosia's<sup>6</sup> grudging at their beast,  
 Who keepeth even footing with the rest."

8-22 1939

## CANTO XX

## ARGUMENT

The eagle celebrates the praise of certain kings, whose glorified spirits form the eye of the bird. In the pupil is David ; and, in the circle round it, Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, William II. of Sicily, and Ripheus. It explains to our Poet, how the souls of those whom he supposed to have had no means of believing in Christ, came to be in heaven ; and concludes with an admonition against presuming to fathom the counsels of God.

WHEN, disappearing from our hemisphere,  
 The world's enlightener vanishes, and day

<sup>1</sup> *Norway.*] Hakon, King of Norway, is probably meant ; who, having given refuge to the murderers of Eric VII., King of Denmark, A.D. 1288, commenced a war against his successor, Eric VIII. "which continued for nine years, almost to the utter ruin and destruction of both kingdoms." Modern Univ. Hist. vol. xxxii. p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> ——— *Him*

*Of Ratza.*] Uladislaus, one of the dynasty of the house of Nemagna, which ruled the kingdom of Rassia or Ratza, in Slavonia, from 1161 to 1371. <sup>3</sup> *Hungary.*] The kingdom of Hungary was about this time disputed by Carobert, son of Charles Martel, and Winceslaus, prince of Bohemia, son of Winceslaus II. <sup>4</sup> *Navarre.*] Navarre was now under the yoke of France. It soon after (in 1328) followed the advice of Dante, and had a monarch of its own.

<sup>5</sup> *Mountainous girdle.*] The Pyrenees.

<sup>6</sup> ——— *Famagosta's streets*

*And Nicosia's.*] Cities in the kingdom of Cyprus, at that time ruled by Henry II., a pusillanimous prince. The meaning appears to be, that the complaints made by those cities of their weak and worthless governor, may be regarded as an earnest of his condemnation at the last doom.

On all sides wasteth ; suddenly the sky,  
 Erewhile irradiate only with his beam,  
 Is yet again unfolded, putting forth  
 Innumerable lights wherein one shines,<sup>1</sup>  
 Of such vicissitude in heaven I thought ;  
 As the great sign,<sup>2</sup> that marshaleth the world  
 And the world's leaders, in the blessed beak  
 Was silent : for that all those living lights,  
 Waxing in splendour, burst forth into songs,  
 Such as from memory glide and fall away.

Sweet Love, that dost apparel thee in smiles !  
 How lustrous was thy semblance in those sparkles,  
 Which merely are from holy thoughts inspired.

After <sup>3</sup> the precious and bright beaming stones,  
 That did ingem the sixth light, ceased the chiming  
 Of their angelic bells ; methought I heard  
 The murmuring of a river, that doth fall  
 From rock to rock transpicuous, making known  
 The richness of his spring-head : and as sound  
 Of cittern, at the fret-board, or of pipe,  
 Is, at the wind-hole, modulate and tuned ;  
 Thus up the neck, as it were hollow, rose  
 That murmuring of the eagle ; and forthwith  
 Voice there assumed ; and thence along the beak  
 Issued in form of words, such as my heart  
 Did look for, on whose tables I inscribed them.

“ The part in me, that sees and bears the sun  
 In mortal eagles,” it began, “ must now  
 Be noted stedfastly : for, of the fires,  
 That figure me, those, glittering in mine eye,  
 Are chief of all the greatest. This, that shines  
 Midmost for pupil, was the same who <sup>4</sup> sang  
 The Holy Spirit's song, and bare about  
 The ark from town to town : now doth he know  
 The merit of his soul-impassion'd strains  
 By their well-fitted guerdon. Of the five,

<sup>1</sup> *Wherein one shines.*] The light of the sun, whence he supposes the other celestial bodies to derive their light. <sup>2</sup> *The great sign.*] The eagle, the Imperial ensign. <sup>3</sup> *After.*] “ After the spirits in the sixth planet (Jupiter) had ceased their singing.” <sup>4</sup> *Who.*] David.



That make the circle of the vision, he,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who to the beak is nearest, comforted  
 The widow for her son : now doth he know,  
 How dear it costeth not to follow Christ ;  
 Both from experience of this pleasant life,  
 And of its opposite. He next,<sup>2</sup> who follows  
 In the circumference, for the over-arch,  
 By true repenting slack'd the pace of death :  
 Now knoweth he, that the decrees of heaven<sup>3</sup>  
 Alter not, when, through pious prayer below,  
 To-day is made to-morrow's destiny.  
 The other following,<sup>4</sup> with the laws and me,  
 To yield the shepherd room, pass'd o'er<sup>5</sup> to Greece ;  
 From good intent, producing evil fruit :  
 Now knoweth he, how all the ill, derived  
 From his well doing, doth not harm him aught ;  
 Though it have brought destruction on the world.  
 That, which thou seest in the under bow,  
 Was William,<sup>6</sup> whom that land bewails, which weeps  
 For Charles and Frederick living : now he knows,  
 How well is loved in heaven the righteous king ;  
 Which he betokens by his radiant seeming.  
 Who, in the erring world beneath, would deem  
 That Trojan Ripheus,<sup>7</sup> in this round, was set,  
 Fifth of the saintly splendours ? now he knows  
 Enough of that, which the world cannot see ;

<sup>1</sup> *He.*] Trajan. See Purgatorio, Canto x. 68.    <sup>2</sup> *He next.*] Hezekiah.

<sup>3</sup> *The decrees of heaven.*] The eternal counsels of God are indeed immutable, though they appear to us men to be altered by the prayers of the pious.    <sup>4</sup> *The other following.*] Constantine.

<sup>5</sup> *Pass'd o'er.*] "Left the Roman state to the Pope, and transferred the seat of the empire to Constantinople."    <sup>6</sup> *William.*] William II.,

King of Sicily, at the latter part of the twelfth century. He was of the Norman line of sovereigns, and obtained the appellation of "the Good"; and, as the Poet says, his loss was as much the subject of regret in his dominions, as the presence of Charles II. of Anjou, and Frederick of Arragon, was of sorrow and complaint.

<sup>7</sup> *Trojan Ripheus.*]

Ripheus justissimus unus

Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui.

Virg., Æn. lib. ii. 427.

Then Ripheus fell, the justest far of all  
 The sons of Troy.

Pitt.

The grace divine : albeit e'en his sight  
 Reach not its utmost depth." Like to the lark,  
 That warbling in the air expatiates long,  
 Then, trilling out his last sweet melody,  
 Drops, satiate with the sweetness ; such appear'd  
 That image, stamp'd by the everlasting pleasure,  
 Which fashions, as they are, all things that be.

I, though my doubting were as manifest,  
 As is through glass <sup>1</sup> the hue that mantles it,  
 In silence waited not ; for to my lips  
 " What things are these ? " involuntary rush'd,  
 And forced a passage out : whereat I mark'd  
 A sudden lightening and new revelry.  
 The eye was kindled ; and the blessed sign,  
 No more to keep me wondering and suspense,  
 Replied : " I see that thou believest these things,  
 Because I tell them, but discern'st not how ;  
 So that thy knowledge waits not on thy faith :  
 As one, who knows the name of thing by rote,  
 But is a stranger to its properties,  
 Till other's tongue reveal them. Fervent love,  
 And lively hope, with violence assail  
 The kingdom of the heavens, and overcome  
 The will of the Most High ; not in such sort  
 As man prevails o'er man ; but conquers it,  
 Because 'tis willing to be conquer'd ; still,  
 Though conquer'd, by its mercy, conquering.

" Those, in the eye who live the first and fifth,  
 Cause thee to marvel, in that thou behold'st  
 The region of the angels deck'd with them.  
 They quitted not their bodies as thou deem'st,  
 Gentiles, but Christians ; in firm rooted faith,  
 This,<sup>2</sup> of the feet in future to be pierced,  
 That,<sup>3</sup> of feet nail'd already to the cross.  
 One from the barrier of the dark abyss,  
 Where never any with good will returns,  
 Came back unto his bones. Of lively hope

<sup>1</sup> *Through glass.*] This is the only allusion I have remarked in our author to the art of painting glass. <sup>2</sup> *This.*] *Ripheus.* <sup>3</sup> *That.*] *Trajan.*

Such was the meed ; of lively hope, that wing'd  
 The prayers <sup>1</sup> sent up to God for his release,  
 And put power into them to bend His will.  
 The glorious Spirit, of whom I speak to thee,  
 A little while returning to the flesh,  
 Believed in him, who had the means to help ;  
 And, in believing, nourish'd such a flame  
 Of holy love, that at the second death  
 He was made sharer in our gamesome mirth.  
 The other, through the riches of that grace,  
 Which from so deep a fountain doth distil,  
 As never eye created saw its rising,  
 Placed all his love below on just and right :  
 Wherefore, of grace, God oped in him the eye  
 To the redemption of mankind to come ;  
 Wherein believing, he endured no more  
 The filth of Paganism, and for their ways  
 Rebuked the stubborn nations. The three nymphs,<sup>2</sup>  
 Whom at the right wheel thou beheld'st advancing,  
 Were sponsors for him, more than thousand years  
 Before baptizing. O how far removed,  
 Predestination ! is thy root from such  
 As see not the First Cause entire : and ye,  
 O mortal men ! be wary how ye judge :  
 For we, who see our Maker, know not yet  
 The number of the chosen ; and esteem  
 Such scantiness of knowledge our delight :  
 For all our good is, in that primal good,  
 Concentrate ; and God's will and ours are one."

So, by that form divine, was given to me  
 Sweet medicine to clear and strengthen sight.  
 And, as one handling skilfully the harp,  
 Attendant on some skilful songster's voice  
 Bids the chord vibrate ; and therein the song  
 Acquires more pleasure : so the whilst it spake,  
 It doth remember me, that I beheld  
 The pair <sup>3</sup> of blessed luminaries move,

<sup>1</sup> *The prayers.*] The prayers of St. Gregory. <sup>2</sup> *The three nymphs.*] Faith, Hope, and Charity. Purgatorio, Canto xxix. 116. <sup>3</sup> *The pair.*] Ripheus and Trajan.

Like the accordant twinkling of two eyes,  
Their beamy circlets, dancing to the sounds.

## CANTO XXI

### ARGUMENT

Dante ascends with Beatrice to the seventh heaven, which is the planet Saturn; wherein is placed a ladder, so lofty, that the top of it is out of his sight. Here are the souls of those who had passed their life in holy retirement and contemplation. Piero Damiano comes near them, and answers questions put to him by Dante; then declares who he was on earth; and ends by declaiming against the luxury of pastors and prelates in those times.

AGAIN mine eyes were fix'd on Beatrice;  
And, with mine eyes, my soul that in her looks  
Found all contentment. Yet no smile she wore:  
And, "Did I smile," quoth she, "thou wouldst be  
straight

Like Semele when into ashes turn'd:  
For, mounting these eternal palace-stairs,  
My beauty, which the loftier it climbs,  
As thou hast noted, still doth kindle more,  
So shines, that, were no tempering interposed,  
Thy mortal puissance would from its rays  
Shrink, as the leaf doth from the thunderbolt.  
Into the seventh splendour<sup>1</sup> are we wafted,  
That, underneath the burning lion's breast,<sup>2</sup>  
Beams, in this hour, commingled with his might.  
Thy mind be with thine eyes; and, in them, mirror'd<sup>3</sup>  
The shape, which in this mirror shall be shown."

Whoso can deem, how fondly I had fed  
My sight upon her blissful countenance,  
May know, when to new thoughts, I changed, what joy  
To do the bidding of my heavenly guide;

<sup>1</sup> *The seventh splendour.*] The planet Saturn. <sup>2</sup> *The burning lion's breast.*] The constellation Leo. <sup>3</sup> *In them, mirror'd.*] "Let the form which thou shalt now behold in this mirror," the planet, that is, of Saturn (soon after, v. 22, called the Crystal), "be reflected in the mirror of thy sight."

In equal balance,<sup>1</sup> poisoning either weight.

Within the crystal, which records the name  
(As its remoter circle girds the world)  
Of that loved monarch,<sup>2</sup> in whose happy reign  
No ill had power to harm, I saw rear'd up,  
In colour like to sun-illumined gold,  
A ladder, which my ken pursued in vain,  
So lofty was the summit ; down whose steps  
I saw the splendours in such multitude  
Descending, every light in heaven, methought,  
Was shed thence. As the rooks, at dawn of day,  
Bestirring them to dry their feathers chill,  
Some speed their way a-field ; and homeward some,  
Returning, cross their flight ; while some abide,  
And wheel around their airy lodge : so seem'd  
That glitterance,<sup>3</sup> wafted on alternate wing,  
As upon certain stair it came, and clash'd  
Its shining. And one, lingering near us, wax'd  
So bright, that in my thought I said : " The love,  
Which this betokens me, admits no doubt."

Unwillingly from question I refrain ;  
To her, by whom my silence and my speech  
Are order'd, looking for a sign : whence she,  
Who in the sight of Him, that seeth all,  
Saw wherefore I was silent, prompted me  
To indulge the fervent wish ; and I began :  
" I am not worthy, of my own desert,  
That thou shouldst answer me : but for her sake,  
Who hath vouchsafed my asking, spirit blest,  
That in thy joy art shrouded ! say the cause.  
Which bringeth thee so near : and wherefore, say,  
Doth the sweet symphony of Paradise  
Keep silence here, pervading with such sounds  
Of rapt devotion every lower sphere ? "  
" Mortal art thou in hearing, as in sight " ;

<sup>1</sup> *In equal balance.*] " My pleasure was as great in complying with her will, as in beholding her countenance." <sup>2</sup> *Of that loved monarch.*] Saturn. Compare Inf., Canto xiv. 91. <sup>3</sup> *That glitterance.*] Quello sfavillar. That multitude of shining spirits, who, coming to a certain point of the ladder, made those different movements, which he has described as made by the birds.

Was the reply : " and what forbade the smile <sup>1</sup>  
 Of Beatrice interrupts our song.  
 Only to yield thee gladness of my voice,  
 And of the light that vests me, I thus far  
 Descend these hallow'd steps : not that more love  
 Invites me ; for, lo ! there aloft,<sup>2</sup> as much  
 Or more of love is witness'd in those flames :  
 But such my lot by charity assign'd,  
 That makes us ready servants, as thou seest,  
 To execute the counsel of the Highest."

" That in this court," said I, " O sacred lamp !  
 Love no compulsion needs, but follows free  
 The eternal Providence, I well discern :  
 This harder find to deem : why, of thy peers,  
 Thou only, to this office wert foredoom'd."

I had not ended, when, like rapid mill,  
 Upon its centre whirl'd the light ; and then  
 The love that did inhabit there, replied :  
 " Splendour eternal, piercing through these folds,  
 Its virtue to my vision knits ; and thus  
 Supported, lifts me so above myself,  
 That on the sovran essence, which it wells from,  
 I have the power to gaze : and hence the joy,  
 Wherewith I sparkle, equaling with my blaze  
 The keenness of my sight. But not the soul,<sup>3</sup>  
 That is in heaven most lustrous, nor the seraph,  
 That hath his eyes most fix'd on God, shall solve  
 What thou hast ask'd : for in the abyss it lies  
 Of th' everlasting statute sunk so low,  
 That no created ken may fathom it.  
 And, to the mortal world when thou return'st,  
 Be this reported : that none henceforth dare  
 Direct his footsteps to so dread a bourn.  
 The mind, that here is radiant, on the earth  
 Is wrapt in mist. Look then if she may do  
 Below, what passeth her ability

<sup>1</sup> *What forbade the smile.*] " Because it would have overcome thee."

<sup>2</sup> *There aloft.*] Where the other souls were. <sup>3</sup> *Not the soul.*] The particular ends of Providence being concealed from the very angels themselves.



When she is ta'en to heaven." By words like these  
 Admonish'd, I the question urged no more ;  
 And of the spirit humbly sued alone  
 To instruct me of its state. "'Twixt either shore <sup>1</sup>  
 Of Italy, nor distant from thy land,  
 A stony ridge <sup>2</sup> ariseth ; in such sort,  
 The thunder doth not lift his voice so high.  
 They call it Catria : <sup>3</sup> at whose foot, a cell  
 Is sacred to the lonely Eremite ;  
 For worship set apart and holy rites."  
 A third time thus it spake ; then added : " There  
 So firmly to God's service I adhered,  
 That with no costlier viands than the juice  
 Of olives, easily I pass'd the heats  
 Of summer and the winter frosts ; content  
 In heaven-ward musings. Rich were the returns  
 And fertile, which that cloister once was used  
 To render to these heavens : now 'tis fallen  
 Into a waste so empty, that ere long  
 Detection must lay bare its vanity.  
 Pietro Damiano <sup>4</sup> there was I y-clept :  
 Pietro the sinner, when before I dwelt,  
 Beside the Adriatic,<sup>5</sup> in the house

<sup>1</sup> *'Twixt either shore.*] Between the Adriatic gulf and the Mediterranean sea. <sup>2</sup> *A stony ridge*] A part of the Apennine. <sup>3</sup> *Catria.*] The abbey of Santa Croce, near Urbino, about half way between Gubbio and La Pergola. Here Dante is said to have resided for some time. <sup>4</sup> *Pietro Damiano.*] "S. Pietro Damiano obtained a great and well-merited reputation, by the pains he took to correct the abuses among the clergy. Ravenna is supposed to have been the place of his birth, about 1007. He was employed in several important missions, and rewarded by Stephen ix. with the dignity of cardinal, and the bishopric of Ostia, to which, however, he preferred his former retreat in the monastery of Fonte Avellana, and prevailed on Alexander ii. to permit him to retire thither. Yet he did not long continue in this seclusion, before he was sent on other embassies. He died at Faenza in 1072. His letters throw much light on the obscure history of these times. Besides them, he has left several treatises on sacred and ecclesiastical subjects. His eloquence is worthy of a better age." Tiraboschi, Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. iii. lib. iv. cap. ii. <sup>5</sup> *Beside the Adriatic.*] Some editions and manuscripts have "fu," instead of "fui." According to the former of these readings, S. Pietro Damiano is made to distinguish himself from S. Pietro degli Onesti, surnamed "Il Peccator," founder of the monastery of Sta. Maria del Porto, on the Adriatic coast, near Ravenna, who died 1119, at about eighty years of age. If it could be ascertained that there was no

Of our blest Lady. Near upon my close  
 Of mortal life, through much importuning  
 I was constrained to wear the hat,<sup>1</sup> that still  
 From bad to worse is shifted.—Cephas<sup>2</sup> came ;  
 He came, who was the Holy Spirit's vessel ;<sup>3</sup>  
 Barefoot and lean ; eating their bread, as chanced,  
 At the first table. Modern Shepherds need  
 Those who on either hand may prop and lead them,  
 So burly are they grown ; and from behind,  
 Others to hoist them. Down the palfrey's sides  
 Spread their broad mantles, so as both the beasts  
 Are cover'd with one skin. O patience ! thou  
 That look'st on this, and dost endure so long."

I at those accents saw the splendours down  
 From step to step alight, and wheel, and wax,  
 Each circuiting, more beautiful. Round this<sup>4</sup>  
 They came, and stay'd them ; utter'd then a shout  
 So loud, it hath no likeness here : nor I  
 Wist what it spake, so deafening was the thunder.

## CANTO XXII

## ARGUMENT

He beholds many other spirits of the devout and contemplative ; and amongst these is addressed by St. Benedict, who, after disclosing his own name and the names of certain of his companions in bliss, replies to the request made by our Poet that he might look on the form of the saint, without that covering of splendour, which then invested it ; and then proceeds, lastly, to inveigh against the corruption of the monks. Next Dante mounts with his heavenly conductress to the eighth heaven, or that of the fixed stars, which he enters at the constellation of the Twins ; and thence looking back, reviews all the space he has past between his present station and the earth.

ASTOUNDED, to the guardian of my steps

I turn'd me, like the child, who always runs

religious house dedicated to the blessed Virgin, before that founded by Pietro degli Onesti, to which the other Pietro might have belonged, this reading would, no doubt, be preferable ; but at present it seems very uncertain which is the right.

<sup>1</sup> *The hat.*] The cardinal's hat.    <sup>2</sup> *Cephas.*] St. Peter.    <sup>3</sup> *The Holy Spirit's vessel.*] St. Paul. See Inf., Canto ii. 30.    <sup>4</sup> *Round this.*] Round the spirit of Pietro Damiano.

Thither for succour, where he trusteth most :  
And she was like the mother, who her son  
Beholding pale and breathless, with her voice  
Soothes him, and he is cheer'd ; for thus she spake,  
Soothing me : " Know'st not thou, thou art in heaven ?  
And know'st not thou, whatever is in heaven,  
Is holy ; and that nothing there is done,  
But is done zealously and well ? Deem now,  
What change in thee the song, and what my smile  
Had wrought, since thus the shout had power to move  
thee ;

In which, couldst thou have understood their prayers,  
The vengeance <sup>1</sup> were already known to thee,  
Which thou must witness ere thy mortal hour.  
The sword of heaven is not in haste to smite,  
Nor yet doth linger ; save unto his seeming,  
Who, in desire or fear, doth look for it.  
But elsewhere now I bid thee turn thy view ;  
So shalt thou many a famous spirit behold."

Mine eyes directing, as she will'd, I saw  
A hundred little spheres, that fairer grew  
By interchange of splendour. I remain'd,  
As one, who fearful of o'er-much presuming,  
Abates in him the keenness of desire,  
Nor dares to question ; when, amid those pearls,  
One largest and most lustrous onward drew,  
That it might yield contentment to my wish ;  
And, from within it, these the sounds I heard.

" If thou, like me, beheld'st the charity  
That burns amongst us ; what thy mind conceives,  
Were utter'd. But that, ere the lofty bound  
Thou reach, expectance may not weary thee ;  
I will make answer even to the thought,  
Which thou hast such respect of. In old days,  
That mountain, at whose side Cassino <sup>2</sup> rests,  
Was, on its height, frequented by a race <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The vengeance.*] Beatrice, it is supposed, intimates the approaching fate of Boniface VIII. See *Purgatorio*, Canto xx. 86. <sup>2</sup> *Cassino.*] A castle in the Terra di Lavoro. <sup>3</sup> *Frequented by a race.*] Lombardi here cites an apposite passage from the writings of Pope

Deceived and ill-disposed : and I it was,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who thither carried first the name of Him,  
 Who brought the soul-subliming truth to man.  
 And such a speeding grace shone over me,  
 That from their impious worship I reclaim'd  
 The dwellers round about, who with the world  
 Were in delusion lost. These other flames,  
 The spirits of men contemplative, were all  
 Enliven'd by that warmth, whose kindly force  
 Gives birth to flowers and fruits of holiness.  
 Here is Macarius<sup>2</sup> ; Romoaldo<sup>3</sup> here ;  
 And here my brethren, who their steps refrain'd  
 Within the cloisters, and held firm their heart."

I answering thus : " Thy gentle words and kind,  
 And this the cheerful semblance I behold,  
 Not unobservant, beaming in ye all,  
 Have raised assurance in me ; wakening it  
 Full-blossom'd in my bosom, as a rose  
 Before the sun, when the consummate flower  
 Has spread to utmost amplitude. Of thee  
 Therefore intreat I, father, to declare  
 If I may gain such favour, as to gaze

St. Gregory. " Mons tria millia, &c." Dialog. lib. ii. cap. 8. " The mountain rising for the space of three miles stretches its top towards the sky, where was a very ancient temple, in which, after the manner of the old heathens, Apollo was worshipped by the foolish rustics. On every side, groves had sprung up in honour of the false gods ; and in these, the mad multitude of unbelievers still tended on their unhallowed sacrifices. There then the man of God (St. Benedict) arriving, beat in pieces the idols ; overturned the altar ; cut down the groves ; and, in the very temple of Apollo, built the shrine of St. Martin, placing that of St. John where the altar of Apollo had stood ; and, by his continual preaching, called the multitude that dwelt round about to the true faith."

<sup>1</sup> *I it was.*] " A new order of monks, which in a manner absorbed all the others that were established in the west, was instituted, A.D. 529, by Benedict of Nursia." Maclaine's Mosheim, Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. cent. vi. p. ii. c. ii. § 6. <sup>2</sup> *Macarius.*] There are two of this name enumerated by Mosheim among the Greek theologians of the fourth century, vol. i. cent. iv. p. xi. chap. ii. § 9. In the following chapter, § 10, it is said, " Macarius, an Egyptian monk, undoubtedly deserves the first rank among the practical writers of this time, as his works displayed, some few things excepted, the brightest and most lovely portraiture of sanctity and virtue." <sup>3</sup> *Romoaldo.*] S. Romoaldo, a native of Ravenna, and the founder of the order of Camaldoli, died in 1027. He was the author of a commentary on the Psalms.

Upon thine image by no covering veil'd."

"Brother!" he thus rejoined, "in the last sphere<sup>1</sup>  
Expect completion of thy lofty aim:  
For there on each desire completion waits,  
And there on mine; where every aim is found  
Perfect, entire, and for fulfilment ripe.  
There all things are as they have ever been:  
For space is none to bound; nor pole divides  
Our ladder reaches even to that clime;  
And so, at giddy distance, mocks thy view,  
Thither the patriarch Jacob<sup>2</sup> saw it stretch  
Its topmost round; when it appear'd to him  
With angels laden. But to mount it now  
None lifts his foot from earth: and hence my rule  
Is left a profitless stain upon the leaves;  
The walls, for abbey rear'd, turn'd into dens;  
The cowls, to sacks choak'd up with musty meal.  
Foul usury doth not more lift itself  
Against God's pleasure, than that fruit, which makes  
The hearts of monks so wanton: for whate'er  
Is in the church's keeping, all pertains  
To such, as sue for heaven's sweet sake; and not  
To those, who in respect of kindred claim,  
Or on more vile allowance. Mortal flesh  
Is grown so dainty, good beginnings last not  
From the oak's birth unto the acorn's setting.  
His convent Peter founded without gold  
Or silver; I with prayers and fasting, mine;  
And Francis, his in meek humility.  
And if thou note the point, whence each proceeds,  
Then look what it hath err'd to; thou shalt find  
The white grown murky. Jordan was turn'd back;  
And a less wonder, than the refluent sea,  
May, at God's pleasure, work amendment here."

<sup>1</sup> *In the last sphere.*] The Empyrean, where he afterwards sees St. Benedict, Canto xxxii. 30. Beatified spirits, though they have different heavens allotted them, have all their seat in that higher sphere. <sup>2</sup> *The patriarch Jacob.*] "And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Gen. xxviii. 12.

So saying, to his assembly back he drew ;  
And they together cluster'd into one ;  
Then all roll'd upward, like an eddying wind.

The sweet dame beckon'd me to follow them :  
And, by that influence only, so prevail'd  
Over my nature, that no natural motion,  
Ascending or descending here below,  
Had, as I mounted, with my pennon vied.

So, reader, as my hope is to return  
Unto the holy triumph, for the which  
I oft-times wail my sins, and smite my breast ;  
Thou hadst been longer drawing out and thrusting  
Thy finger in the fire, than I was, ere  
The sign,<sup>1</sup> that followeth Taurus, I beheld,  
And enter'd its precinct. O glorious stars !  
O light impregnate with exceeding virtue !  
To whom whate'er of genius lifteth me  
Above the vulgar, grateful I refer ;  
With ye the parent <sup>2</sup> of all mortal life  
Arose and set, when I did first inhale  
The Tuscan air ; and afterward, when grace  
Vouchsafed me entrance to the lofty wheel <sup>3</sup>  
That in its orb impels ye, fate decreed  
My passage at your clime. To you my soul  
Devoutly sighs, for virtue, even now,  
To meet the hard emprize that draws me on.

" Thou art so near the sum of blessedness,"  
Said Beatrice, " that behoves thy ken  
Be vigilant and clear. And, to this end,  
Or ever thou advance thee further, hence  
Look downward, and contemplate, what a world  
Already stretch'd under our feet there lies :  
So as thy heart may, in its blithest mood,  
Present itself to the triumphal throng,  
Which, through the ethereal concave, comes rejoicing."

I straight obey'd ; and with mine eye return'd  
Through all the seven spheres ; and saw this globe

<sup>1</sup> *The sign.*] The constellation of Gemini.    <sup>2</sup> *The parent.*] The sun was in the constellation of the Twins at the time of Dante's birth.

<sup>3</sup> *The lofty wheel.*] The eighth heaven ; that, of the fixed stars.



So pitiful of semblance, that perforce  
 It moved my smiles : and him in truth I hold  
 For wisest, who esteems it least ; whose thoughts  
 Elsewhere are fixed, him worthiest call and best.  
 I saw the daughter of Latona shine  
 Without the shadow,<sup>1</sup> whereof late I deem'd  
 That dense and rare were cause. Here I sustain'd  
 The visage, Hyperion, of thy son ; <sup>2</sup>  
 And mark'd, how near him with their circles, round  
 Move Maia and Dione ; <sup>3</sup> here discern'd  
 Jove's tempering 'twixt his sire and son ; <sup>4</sup> and hence,  
 Their changes and their various aspects  
 Distinctly scann'd. Nor might I not descry  
 Of all the seven, how bulky each, how swift ;  
 Nor, of their several distances, not learn.  
 This petty area (o'er the which we stride  
 So fiercely), as along the eternal Twins  
 I wound my way, appear'd before me all,  
 Forth from the havens stretch'd unto the hills.  
 Then, to the beauteous eyes, mine eyes return'd.

## CANTO XXIII

## ARGUMENT

He sees Christ triumphing with His church. The Saviour ascends, followed by His Virgin Mother. The others remain with St. Peter.

E'EN as the bird, who midst the leafy bower  
 Has, in her nest, sat darkling through the night,  
 With her sweet brood ; impatient to descry  
 Their wished looks, and to bring home their food,  
 In the fond quest unconscious of her toil :  
 She, of the time prevenient, on the spray,

<sup>1</sup> *Without the shadow.*] See Canto ii. 71.      <sup>2</sup> *Of thy son.*] The sun.  
<sup>3</sup> *Maia and Dione.*] The planets Mercury and Venus : Dione being the mother of the latter, and Maia of the former deity.      <sup>4</sup> *'Twixt his sire and son.*] Betwixt Saturn and Mars.

That overhangs their couch, with wakeful gaze  
 Expects the sun ; nor ever, till the dawn,  
 Removeth from the east her eager ken :  
 So stood the dame erect, and bent her glance  
 Wistfully on that region,<sup>1</sup> where the sun  
 Abateth most his speed ; that, seeing her  
 Suspense and wondering, I became as one,  
 In whom desire is waken'd, and the hope  
 Of somewhat new to come fills with delight.

Short space ensued ; I was not held, I say,  
 Long in expectance, when I saw the heaven  
 Wax more and more resplendent ; and, “ Behold,”  
 Cried Beatrice, “ the triumphal hosts  
 Of Christ, and all the harvest gather'd in,  
 Made ripe by these revolving spheres.” Meseem'd,  
 That, while she spake, her image all did burn ;  
 And in her eyes such fulness was of joy,  
 As I am fain to pass unconstrued by.

As in the calm full moon, when Trivia<sup>2</sup> smiles,  
 In peerless beauty, 'mid the eternal nymphs,<sup>3</sup>  
 That paint through all its gulfs the blue profound ;  
 In bright pre-eminence so saw I there  
 O'er million lamps a sun, from whom all drew  
 Their radiance, as from ours the starry train :  
 And, through the living light, so lustrous glow'd  
 The substance, that my ken endured it not.

O Beatrice ! sweet and precious guide.  
 Who cheer'd me with her comfortable words :  
 “ Against the virtue, that o'erpowereth thee,  
 Avails not to resist. Here is the Might,<sup>4</sup>  
 And here the Wisdom, which did open lay  
 The path, that had been yearned for so long,  
 Betwixt the heaven and earth.” Like to the fire,  
 That, in a cloud imprison'd, doth break out  
 Expansive, so that from its womb enlarged,  
 It falleth against nature to the ground ;

<sup>1</sup> *That region.*] Towards the south, where the course of the sun appears less rapid, than when he is in the east or the west. <sup>2</sup> *Trivia.*] A name of Diana. <sup>3</sup> *The eternal nymphs.*] The stars. <sup>4</sup> *The Might.*] Our Saviour.

Thus, in that heavenly banqueting, my soul  
Outgrew herself ; and, in the transport lost,  
Holds now remembrance none of what she was.

“ Ope thou thine eyes, and mark me : thou hast  
seen

Things, that empower thee to sustain my smile.”

I was as one, when a forgotten dream  
Doth come across him, and he strives in vain  
To shape it in his fantasy again :  
Whenas that gracious boon was proffer'd me,  
Which never may be cancel'd from the book  
Wherein the past is written. Now were all  
Those tongues to sound, that have, on sweetest  
milk

Of Polyhymnia and her sisters, fed  
And fatten'd ; not with all their help to boot,  
Unto the thousandth parcel of the truth,  
My song might shadow forth that saintly smile,  
How merely, in her saintly looks, it wrought.  
And, with such figuring of Paradise,  
The sacred strain must leap, like one that meets  
A sudden interruption to his road.  
But he, who thinks how ponderous the theme,  
And that 'tis laid upon a mortal shoulder,  
May pardon, if it tremble with the burden.  
The track, our venturous keel must furrow, brooks  
No unribb'd pinnace, no self-sparing pilot.

“ Why doth my face,” said Beatrice, “ thus  
Enamour thee, as that thou dost not turn  
Unto the beautiful garden, blossoming  
Beneath the rays of Christ ? Here is the rose,<sup>1</sup>  
Wherein the Word Divine was made incarnate ;  
And here the lilies,<sup>2</sup> by whose odour known  
The way of life was follow'd.” Prompt I heard  
Her bidding, and encounter'd once again  
The strife of aching vision. As, erewhile,

<sup>1</sup> *The rose.*] The Virgin Mary, the Rosa Mystica. “I was exalted like a palm-tree in Engaddi, and as a rose-plant in Jericho.” Eccles. xxiv. 14. <sup>2</sup> *The lilies.*] The Apostles. “And give ye a sweet savour as frankincense, and flourish as a lily.” Eccles. xxxix. 14.

Through glance of sunlight, stream'd through broken  
cloud,

Mine eyes a flower-besprinkled mead have seen ;  
Though veil'd themselves in shade : so saw I there  
Legions of splendours, on whom burning rays  
Shed lightnings from above ; yet saw I not  
The fountain whence they flow'd. O gracious virtue !  
Thou, whose broad stamp is on them, higher up  
Thou didst exalt thy glory,<sup>1</sup> to give room  
To my o'erlabour'd sight ; when at the name  
Of that fair flower,<sup>2</sup> whom duly I invoke  
Both morn and eve, my soul with all her might  
Collected, on the goodliest ardour fix'd.  
And, as the bright dimensions of the star  
In heaven excelling, as once here on earth,  
Were, in my eye-balls livelily portray'd ;  
Lo ! from within the sky a cresset <sup>3</sup> fell,  
Circling in fashion of a diadem ;  
And girt the star ; and, hovering, round it wheel'd.

Whatever melody sounds sweetest here,  
And draws the spirit most unto itself,  
Might seem a rent cloud, when it grates the thunder ;  
Compared unto the sounding of that lyre,<sup>4</sup>  
Wherewith the goodliest sapphire<sup>5</sup> that inlays  
The floor of heaven, was crown'd. " Angelic Love  
I am, who thus with hovering flight enwheel  
The lofty rapture from that womb inspired,  
Where our desire did dwell : and round thee so,  
Lady of Heaven ! will hover ; long as thou  
Thy Son shalt follow, and diviner joy  
Shall from thy presence gild the highest sphere."

Such close was to the circling melody :  
And, as it ended, all the other lights  
Took up the strain, and echoed Mary's name.

<sup>1</sup> *Thou didst exalt thy glory.*] The divine light retired upwards, to render the eyes of Dante more capable of enduring the spectacle which now presented itself.

<sup>2</sup> ——— *The name*

*Of that fair flower.*] The name of the Virgin.

<sup>3</sup> *A cresset.*] The angel Gabriel. <sup>4</sup> *That lyre.*] By synecdoche, the lyre is put for the angel. <sup>5</sup> *The goodliest sapphire.*] The Virgin.

The robe,<sup>1</sup> that with its regal folds enwraps  
 The world, and with the nearer breath of God  
 Doth burn and quiver, held so far retired  
 Its inner hem and skirting over us,  
 That yet no glimmer of its majesty  
 Had stream'd unto me : therefore were mine eyes  
 Unequal to pursue the crowned flame,<sup>2</sup>  
 That towering rose, and sought the seed <sup>3</sup> it bore.  
 And like to babe, that stretches forth its arms  
 For very eagerness toward the breast,  
 After the milk is taken ; so outstretch'd  
 Their wavy summits all the fervent band,  
 Through zealous love to Mary : then, in view,  
 There halted ; and " Regina Cœli " <sup>4</sup> sang  
 So sweetly, the delight hath left me never,

Oh ! what o'erflowing plenty is up-piled  
 In those rich-laden coffers,<sup>5</sup> which below  
 Sow'd the good seed, whose harvest now they keep.  
 Here are the treasures tasted, that with tears  
 Were in the Babylonian exile <sup>6</sup> won,  
 When gold had fail'd them. Here, in synod high  
 Of ancient council with the new convened,  
 Under the Son of Mary and of God,  
 Victorious he <sup>7</sup> his mighty triumph holds,  
 To whom the keys of glory were assign'd.

<sup>1</sup> *The robe.*] The ninth heaven, the primum mobile, that enfolds and moves the eight lower heavens. <sup>2</sup> *The crowned flame.*] The Virgin, with the angel hovering over her. <sup>3</sup> *The seed.*] Our Saviour. <sup>4</sup> *Regina Cœli.*] "The beginning of an anthem, sung by the church at Easter, in honour of our Lady." Volpi. <sup>5</sup> *Those rich-laden coffers.*] Those spirits, who, having sown the seed of good works on earth now contain the fruit of their pious endeavours. <sup>6</sup> *In the Babylonian exile.*] During their abode in this world. <sup>7</sup> *He.*] St. Peter, with the other holy men of the Old and New Testament.

## CANTO XXIV

## ARGUMENT

St. Peter examines Dante touching Faith, and is contented with his answers.

“O YE! in chosen fellowship advanced  
To the great supper of the blessed Lamb,  
Whereon who feeds hath every wish fulfill’d;  
If to this man through God’s grace be vouchsafed  
Foretaste of that, which from your table falls,  
Or ever death his fated term prescribe;  
Be ye not heedless of his urgent will:  
But may some influence of your sacred dews  
Sprinkle him. Of the fount ye alway drink,  
Whence flows what most he craves.” Beatrice  
spake;

And the rejoicing spirits, like to spheres  
On firm-set poles revolving, trail’d a blaze  
Of comet splendour: and as wheels, that wind  
Their circles in the horologe, so work  
The stated rounds, that to the observant eye  
The first seems still, and as it flew, the last;  
E’en thus their carols<sup>1</sup> weaving variously,  
They, by the measure paced, or swift, or slow,  
Made me to rate the riches of their joy.

From that,<sup>2</sup> which I did note in beauty most  
Excelling, saw I issue forth a flame  
So bright, as none was left more goodly there.  
Round Beatrice thrice it wheel’d about,  
With so divine a song, that fancy’s ear  
Records it not; and the pen passeth on,  
And leaves a blank: for that our mortal speech,  
Nor e’en the inward shaping of the brain,  
Hath colours fine enough to trace such folds.

“O saintly sister mine! thy prayer devout  
Is with so vehement affection urged,

<sup>1</sup> *Their carols.*] Carole. Editor’s note: In old days to carol meant to dance, as well as to sing.

<sup>2</sup> *From that.*] St. Peter.



Thou dost unbind me from that beauteous sphere.”

Such were the accents towards my lady breathed  
From that blest ardour, soon as it was stay'd ;  
To whom she thus : “ O everlasting light  
Of him, within whose mighty grasp our Lord  
Did leave the keys, which of this wondrous bliss  
He bare below ! tent <sup>1</sup> this man as thou wilt,  
With lighter probe or deep, touching the faith,  
By the which thou didst on the billows walk.  
If he in love, in hope, and in belief,  
Be stedfast, is not hid from thee : for thou  
Hast there thy ken, where all things are beheld  
In liveliest portraiture. But since true faith  
Has peopled this fair realm with citizens ;  
Meet is, that to exalt its glory more,  
Thou, in his audience, shouldst thereof discourse.”

Like to the bachelor, who arms himself,  
And speaks not, till the master have proposed  
The question, to approve,<sup>2</sup> and not to end it ;  
So I, in silence, arm'd me, while she spake,  
Summoning up each argument to aid ;  
As was behoveful for such questioner,  
And such profession : “ As good Christian ought,  
Declare thee, what is faith ? ” Whereat I raised  
My forehead to the light, whence this had breathed ;  
Then turn'd to Beatrice ; and in her looks  
Approval met, that from their inmost fount  
I should unlock the waters. “ May the grace,  
That giveth me the captain of the church  
For confessor,” said I, “ vouchsafe to me  
Apt utterance for my thoughts ” ; then added :  
“ Sire !

E'en as set down by the unerring style

<sup>1</sup> *Tent.*] Tenta. The word “tent,” *try*, is used by our old writers, who, I think, usually spell it “taint.” <sup>2</sup> *To approve.*] “Per approbarla.” Landino has “aiutarla.” “The bachelor, or disputant in the school, arms or prepares himself to discuss the question proposed by the master, whose business it is to terminate it.” Such is Vellutello's interpretation ; and it has the merit of being, at least, more intelligible than Lombardi's, who, without reason, accuses the other commentators, except Venturi (whose explanation he rejects), of passing over the difficulty.

Of thy dear brother, who with thee conspired  
 To bring Rome in unto the way of life,  
 Faith<sup>1</sup> of things hoped is substance, and the proof  
 Of things not seen ; and herein doth consist  
 Methinks its essence.”—“ Rightly hast thou deem’d,”  
 Was answer’d ; “ if thou well discern, why first  
 He hath defined it substance, and then proof.”

“ The deep things,” I replied, “ which here I scan  
 Distinctly, are below from mortal eye  
 So hidden, they have in belief alone  
 Their being ; on which credence, hope sublime  
 Is built : and, therefore substance, it intends.  
 And inasmuch as we must needs infer  
 From such belief our reasoning, all respect  
 To other view excluded ; hence of proof  
 The intention is derived.” Forthwith I heard :  
 “ If thus, whate’er by learning men attain,  
 Were understood ; the sophist would want room  
 To exercise his wit.” So breathed the flame  
 Of love ; then added : “ Current<sup>2</sup> is the coin  
 Thou utter’st, both in weight and in alloy.  
 But tell me, if thou hast it in thy purse.”

“ Even so glittering and so round,” said I,  
 “ I not a whit misdoubt of its assay.”

Next issued from the deep-imbosom’d splendour :  
 “ Say, whence the costly jewel, on the which  
 Is founded every virtue, came to thee.”

“ The flood,” I answer’d, “ from the Spirit of God  
 Rain’d down upon the ancient bond and new,<sup>3</sup>  
 Here is the reasoning, that convinceth me  
 So feelingly, each argument beside  
 Seems blunt, and forceless, in comparison.”  
 Then heard I : “ Wherefore holdest thou that each,  
 The elder proposition and the new,  
 Which so persuade thee, are the voice of heaven ? ”

“ The works that follow’d, evidence their truth ” ;

<sup>1</sup> Faith.] Heb. xi. 1.      <sup>2</sup> Current.] “ The answer thou hast made, is right : but let me know if thy inward persuasion be conformable to thy profession.”      <sup>3</sup> The ancient bond and new.] The Old and New Testament.

I answer'd: "Nature did not make for these  
The iron hot, or on her anvil mould them."

"Who voucheth to thee of the works themselves,"  
Was the reply, "that they in very deed  
Are that they purport? None hath sworn so to  
thee."

"That all the world," said I, "should have been  
turn'd

To Christian, and no miracle been wrought,  
Would in itself be such a miracle,  
The rest were not an hundredth part so great.  
E'en thou went'st forth in poverty and hunger  
To set the goodly plant, that, from the vine  
It once was, now is grown unsightly bramble."

That ended, through the high celestial court  
Resounded all the spheres, "Praise we one God!"  
In song of most unearthly melody.  
And when that Worthy<sup>1</sup> thus, from branch to branch,  
Examining, had led me, that we now  
Approach'd the topmost bough; he straight re-  
sumed:

"The grace, that holds sweet dalliance with thy soul  
So far discreetly hath thy lips unclosed;  
That, whatsoe'er has past them, I commend.  
Behoves thee to express, what thou believest,  
The next; and, whereon, thy belief hath grown."

"O saintly sire and spirit!" I began,  
"Who seest that, which thou didst so believe,  
As to outstrip<sup>2</sup> feet younger than thine own,  
Toward the sepulchre; thy will is here,  
That I the tenour of my creed unfold;  
And thou, the cause of it, hast likewise ask'd.  
And I reply: I in one God believe;

<sup>1</sup> *That Worthy.*] Quel Baron. In the next Canto, St. James is called "Barone." So in Boccaccio, G. vi. N. 10, we find "Baron Messer Santi Antonio." <sup>2</sup> *As to outstrip.*] Venturi insists that the Poet has here "made a slip"; for that John came first to the sepulchre, though Peter was the first to enter it. But let Dante have leave to explain his own meaning, in a passage from his third book *De Monarchiâ*: "Dicit etiam Johannes ipsum (scilicet Petrum) introisse subito, cum venit in monumentum, videns alium discipulum cunctantem ad ostium," p. 146.

One sole eternal Godhead, of whose love  
 All heaven is moved, Himself unmoved the while.  
 Nor demonstration physical alone,  
 Or more intelligential and abstruse,  
 Persuades me to this faith : but from that truth,  
 It cometh to me rather, which is shed  
 Through Moses ; the rapt Prophets ; and the Psalms ;  
 The Gospel ; and what ye yourselves did write,  
 When ye were gifted of the Holy Ghost.  
 In three eternal Persons I believe ;  
 Essence threefold and one ; mysterious league  
 Of union absolute, which, many a time,  
 The word of Gospel lore upon my mind  
 Imprints : and from this germ, this firstling spark  
 The lively flame dilates ; and, like heaven's star,  
 Doth glitter in me." As the master hears,  
 Well pleased, and then enfoldeth in his arms  
 The servant, who hath joyful tidings brought,  
 And having told the errand keeps his peace ;  
 Thus benediction uttering with song,  
 Soon as my peace I held, compass'd me thrice  
 The apostolic radiance, whose behest  
 Had oped my lips : so well their answer pleased.

## CANTO XXV

### ARGUMENT

St. James questions our Poet concerning Hope. Next St. John appears ; and, on perceiving that Dante looks intently on him, informs him that he, St. John, had left his body resolved into earth, upon the earth, and that Christ and the Virgin alone had come with their bodies into heaven.

If e'er the sacred poem, that hath made  
 Both heaven and earth copartners in its toil,  
 And with lean abstinence, through many a year,  
 Faded my brow, be destined to prevail  
 Over the cruelty, which bars me forth

Of the fair sheep-fold,<sup>1</sup> where, a sleeping lamb,  
 The wolves set on and fain had worried me ;  
 With other voice, and fleece of other grain,  
 I shall forthwith return ; and, standing up  
 At my baptismal font, shall claim the wreath  
 Due to the poet's temples : for I there  
 First enter'd on the faith, which maketh souls  
 Acceptable to God : and, for its sake,<sup>2</sup>  
 Peter had then circled my forehead thus.

Next from the squadron, whence had issued forth  
 The first fruit of Christ's vicars on the earth,  
 Toward us moved a light, at view whereof  
 My Lady, full of gladness, spake to me :

" Lo ! lo ! behold the peer of mickle might,  
 That makes Galicia throng'd with visitants." <sup>3</sup>

As when the ring-dove by his mate alights ;  
 In circles, each about the other wheels,  
 And, murmuring, cooes his fondness : thus saw I  
 One, of the other <sup>4</sup> great and glorious prince,  
 With kindly greeting, hail'd ; extolling, both,  
 Their heavenly banqueting : but when an end  
 Was to their gratulation, silent, each,  
 Before me sat they down, so burning bright,  
 I could not look upon them. Smiling then,  
 Beatrice spake : " O life in glory shrined !  
 Who <sup>5</sup> didst the largess <sup>6</sup> of our kingly court  
 Set down with faithful pen ; let now thy voice,  
 Of hope the praises, in this height resound.

<sup>1</sup> *The fair sheep-fold.*] Florence, whence he was banished. <sup>2</sup> *For its sake.*] For the sake of that faith. <sup>3</sup> *Galicia throng'd with visitants.*] See Mariana, Hist. lib. xi. cap. xiii. " En el tiempo," &c. " At the time that the sepulchre of the apostle St. James was discovered, the devotion for that place extended itself not only over all Spain, but even round about to foreign nations. Multitudes from all parts of the world came to visit it. <sup>4</sup> *One, of the other.*] St. Peter and St. James. <sup>5</sup> *Who.*] The Epistle of St. James is here attributed to the elder apostle of that name, whose shrine was at Compostella, in Galicia. Which of the two was the author of it, is yet doubtful. <sup>6</sup> *Largess.*] He appears to allude to the Epistle of James, chap. i. v. 5. " If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him." Or, to v. 17 : " Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Some editions, however, read " l'allegrezza," " joy," instead of " la larghezza."

For well thou know'st, who figurest it as oft,<sup>1</sup>  
As Jesus, to ye three, more brightly shone."

"Lift up thy head; and be thou strong in trust:  
For that, which hither from the mortal world  
Arriveth, must be ripen'd in our beam."

Such cheering accents from the second flame<sup>2</sup>  
Assured me; and mine eyes I lifted up<sup>3</sup>  
Unto the mountains, that had bow'd them late  
With over-heavy burden. "Sith our Liege  
Wills of His grace, that thou, or e'er thy death,  
In the most secret council with His lords  
Shouldst be confronted, so that having view'd  
The glories of our court, thou mayst therewith  
Thyself, and all who hear, invigorate  
With hope, that leads to blissful end; declare,  
What is that hope? how it doth flourish in thee?  
And whence thou hadst it?" Thus, proceeding still,  
The second light: and she, whose gentle love  
My soaring pennons in that lofty flight  
Escorted, thus preventing me, rejoin'd:  
"Among her sons, not one more full of hope,  
Hath the church militant: so 'tis of him  
Recorded in the sun, whose liberal orb  
Enlighteneth all our tribe: and ere his term  
Of warfare, hence permitted he is come,  
From Egypt to Jerusalem,<sup>4</sup> to see.  
The other points, both which<sup>5</sup> thou hast inquired,  
Not for more knowledge, but that he may tell  
How dear thou hold'st the virtue; these to him

<sup>1</sup> *As oft.*] Landino and Venturi, who read "Quanto," explains this, that the frequency with which James had commended the virtue of hope, was in proportion to the brightness in which Jesus had appeared at His transfiguration. Vellutello, who reads "Quante," supposes that James three times recommends patient hope in the last chapter of his Epistle; and that Jesus, as many times, showed His brightness to the three disciples; once when He cleansed the lepers (Luke, v.); again when He raised the daughter of Jairus (Mark, v.); and a third time when He was transfigured. <sup>2</sup> *The second flame.*] St. James. <sup>3</sup> *I lifted up.*] "I looked up to the Apostles." "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Psa. cxxi. 1. <sup>4</sup> *From Egypt to Jerusalem.*] From the lower world to heaven. <sup>5</sup> *Both which.*] One point Beatrice has herself answered; "how that hope flourishes in him." The other two remain for Dante to resolve.



Leave I : for he may answer thee with ease,  
And without boasting, so God give him grace."

Like to the scholar, practised in his task,  
Who, willing to give proof of diligence,  
Seconds his teacher gladly ; " Hope," <sup>1</sup> said I,  
" Is of the joy to come a sure expectance,  
The effect of grace divine and merit preceding.  
This light from many a star, visits my heart ;  
But flow'd to me, the first, from him who sang <sup>2</sup>  
The songs of the Supreme ; himself supreme  
Among his tuneful brethren. ' Let all hope  
In thee,' so spake his anthem, <sup>3</sup> ' who have known  
Thy name ' ; and, with my faith, who know not that ?  
From thee, the next, distilling from his spring,  
In thine epistle, fell on me the drops  
So plenteously, that I on others shower  
The influence of their dew." Whileas I spake,  
A lamping, as of quick and volley'd lightning,  
Within the bosom of that mighty sheen <sup>4</sup>  
Play'd tremulous : then forth these accents breathed :  
" Love for the virtue, which attended me  
E'en to the palm, and issuing from the field,  
Glowes vigorous yet within me ; and inspires  
To ask of thee, whom also it delights,  
What promise thou from hope, in chief, dost win."

" Both scriptures, new and ancient," I replied,  
" Propose the mark (which even now I view)  
For souls beloved of God. Isaias <sup>5</sup> saith,  
' That, in their own land, each one must be clad  
In twofold vesture ' ; and their proper land

<sup>1</sup> *Hope.*] This is from the Sentences of Petrus Lombardus. " Est autem spes virtus, quâ spiritualia et æterna bona sperantur, id est cum fiduciâ expectantur. Est enim spes certa expectatio futuræ beatitudinis, veniens ex Dei gratiâ et ex meritis præcedentibus vel ipsam spem, quam naturâ præit charitas ut rem speratam, id est beatitudinem æternam. Sine meritis enim aliquid sperare non spes, sed præsumptio dici potest." Pet. Lomb. Sen., lib. iii. dist. 26, Ed. Bas. 1486, fol.

<sup>2</sup> Editor's note: *From him who sang.*] David.

<sup>3</sup> *His anthem.*] " They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee." Psa. ix. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *That mighty sheen.*] The spirit of St. James. <sup>5</sup> *Isaias.*] " He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Chap. lxi. 10.

Is this delicious life. In terms more full,  
 And clearer far, thy brother <sup>1</sup> hath set forth  
 This revelation to us, where he tells  
 Of the white raiment destined to the saints.”  
 And, as the words were ending, from above,  
 “ They hope in thee ! ” first heard we cried : whereto  
 Answer’d the carols all. Amidst them next,  
 A light of so clear amplitude emerged,  
 That winter’s month <sup>2</sup> were but a single day  
 Were such a crystal in the Cancer’s sign.

Like as a virgin riseth up, and goes,  
 And enters on the mazes of the dance ;  
 Though gay, yet innocent of worse intent,  
 Than to do fitting honour to the bride :  
 So I beheld the new effulgence come  
 Unto the other two, who in a ring  
 Wheel’d, as became their rapture. In the dance,  
 And in the song, it mingled. And the dame  
 Held on them fix’d her looks ; e’en as the spouse,  
 Silent, and moveless. “ This <sup>3</sup> is he, who lay  
 Upon the bosom of our pelican :  
 This he, into whose keeping, from the cross,  
 The mighty charge was given.” Thus she spake ;  
 Yet therefore nought the more removed her sight  
 From marking them : or e’er her words began,  
 Or when they closed. As he, who looks intent,  
 And strives with searching ken, how he may see  
 The sun in his eclipse, and, through desire  
 Of seeing, loseth power of sight ; so I <sup>4</sup>  
 Peer’d on that last resplendence, while I heard :  
 “ Why dazzlest thou thine eyes in seeking that,

<sup>1</sup> *Thy brother.*] St. John in the Revelation, vii. 9. <sup>2</sup> *Winter’s month.*] “ If a luminary, like that which now appeared, were to shine throughout the month following the winter solstice, during which the constellation Cancer appears in the east at the setting of the sun, there would be no interruption to the light, but the whole month would be as a single day.” <sup>3</sup> *This.*] St. John, who reclined on the bosom of our Saviour, and to whose charge Jesus recommended His mother. <sup>4</sup> *So I.*] He looked so earnestly, to descry whether St. John were present there in body, or in spirit only ; having had his doubts raised by that saying of our Saviour’s : “ If I will, that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? ”

Which here abides not ? Earth my body is,  
 In earth ; and shall be, with the rest, so long,  
 As till our number equal the decree  
 Of the Most High. The two <sup>1</sup> that have ascended,  
 In this our blessed cloister, shine alone  
 With the two garments. So report below."

As when, for ease of labour, or to shun  
 Suspected peril, at a whistle's breath,  
 The oars, erewhile dash'd frequent in the wave,  
 All rest : the flamy circle at that voice  
 So rested ; and the mingling sound was still,  
 Which from the trinal band, soft-breathing, rose.  
 I turn'd, but ah ! how trembled in my thought,  
 When, looking at my side again to see  
 Beatrice, I descried her not ; although,  
 Not distant, on the happy coast she stood.

Sept. 12 - 193,

## CANTO XXVI

### ARGUMENT

St. John examines our Poet touching Charity. Afterwards Adam tells when he was created, and placed in the terrestrial Paradise ; how long he remained in that state ; what was the occasion of his fall ; when he was admitted into heaven ; and what language he spake.

With dazzled eyes, whilst wondering I remain'd ;  
 Forth of the beamy flame,<sup>2</sup> which dazzled me,  
 Issued a breath, that in attention mute  
 Detain'd me ; and these words it spake : "'Twere  
     well,  
 That, long as till thy vision, on my form  
 O'erspent, regain its virtue, with discourse  
 Thou compensate the brief delay. Say then,  
 Beginning, to what point thy soul aspires :  
 And meanwhile rest assured, that sight in thee

<sup>1</sup> *The two.*] Christ and Mary, whom he has described in the last Canto but one, as rising above his sight.   <sup>2</sup> *The beamy flame.*] St. John.

Is but o'erpower'd a space, not wholly quench'd ;  
 Since thy fair guide and lovely, in her look  
 Hath potency, the like to that, which dwelt  
 In Ananias' hand.<sup>1</sup>” I answering thus :

“ Be to mine eyes the remedy, or late  
 Or early, at her pleasure ; for they were  
 The gates, at which she enter'd, and did light  
 Her never-dying fire. My wishes here  
 Are centred : in this palace is the weal,  
 That Alpha and Omega is, to all  
 The lessons love can read me.” Yet again  
 The voice, which had dispersed my fear when dazed  
 With that excess, to converse urged, and spake :  
 “ Behoves thee sift more narrowly thy terms ;  
 And say, who level'd at this scope thy bow.”

“ Philosophy,” said I, “ hath arguments,  
 And this place hath authority enough,  
 To imprint in me such love : for, of constraint,  
 Good, inasmuch as we perceive the good,  
 Kindles our love ; and in degree the more,  
 As it comprises more of goodness in 't.  
 The essence then, where such advantage is,  
 That each good, found without it, is nought else  
 But of this light the beam, must needs attract  
 The soul of each one, loving, who the truth  
 Discerns, on which this proof is built. Such truth  
 Learn I from him,<sup>2</sup> who shows me the first love  
 Of all intelligential substances  
 Eternal : from His voice I learn, whose word  
 Is truth ; that of Himself to Moses saith,  
 ‘ I will make <sup>3</sup> all my good before thee pass ’ :  
 Lastly, from thee I learn, who chief proclaim'st

<sup>1</sup> *Ananias' hand.*] Who, by putting his hand on St. Paul, restored his sight. Acts, ix. 17. <sup>2</sup> *From him.*] Some suppose that Plato is here meant, who, in his Banquet, makes Phædrus say : ὁμολογῆται ὁ ἔρως ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις εἶναι, πρεσβυτάτος δὲ ὧν, μεγίστων ἀγαθῶν ἡμῖν αἰτίος εἶσθαι. “ Love is confessedly amongst the eldest of beings ; and being the eldest, is the cause to us of the greatest goods.” Plat. Op. tom. x. p. 177. Bip. ed. Others have understood it of Aristotle ; and others, of the writer who goes by the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, referred to in the twenty-eighth Canto. <sup>3</sup> *I will make.*] Exodus xxxiii. 19.

E'en at the outset <sup>1</sup> of thy heralding,  
In mortal ears the mystery of heaven."

"Through human wisdom, and the authority  
Therewith agreeing," heard I answer'd, "keep  
The choicest of thy love for God. But say,  
If thou yet other cords within thee feel'st,  
That draw thee towards Him; so that thou report  
How many are the fangs, with which this love  
Is grappled to thy soul." I did not miss,  
To what intent the eagle of our Lord <sup>2</sup>  
Had pointed his demand; yea, noted well  
The avowal which he led to; and resumed:  
"All grappling bonds, that knit the heart to God,  
Confederate to make fast our charity.  
The being of the world; and mine own being;  
The death which He endured, that I should live;  
And that, which all the faithful hope, as I do;  
To the foremention'd lively knowledge join'd;  
Have from the sea of ill love saved my bark,  
And on the coast secured it of the right.  
As for the leaves, <sup>3</sup> that in the garden bloom,  
My love for them is great, as is the good  
Dealt by the eternal hand, that tends them all."

I ended: and therewith a song most sweet  
Rang through the spheres; and "Holy, holy, holy,"  
Accordant with the rest, my lady sang.  
And as a sleep is broken and dispersed  
Through sharp encounter of the nimble light,  
With the eye's spirit running forth to meet  
The ray, from membrane on to membrane urged;  
And the upstartled wight loathes that he sees;  
So, at his sudden waking, he misdeems  
Of all around him, till assurance waits  
On better judgment: thus the saintly dame  
Drove from before mine eyes the motes away,  
With the resplendence of her own, that cast  
Their brightness downward, thousand miles below.  
Whence I my vision, clearer than before,

<sup>1</sup> *At the outset.*] John i. 1, &c.    <sup>2</sup> *The eagle of our Lord.*] St. John.  
<sup>3</sup> *The leaves.*] Created beings.

Recover'd ; and well nigh astounded, ask'd  
Of a fourth light, that now with us I saw.

And Beatrice : " The first living soul,<sup>1</sup>  
That ever the first virtue framed, admires  
Within these rays his Maker." Like the leaf,  
That bows its lithe top till the blast is blown ;  
By its own virtue rear'd, then stands aloof :  
So I, the whilst she said, awe-stricken bow'd.  
Then eagerness to speak embolden'd me ;  
And I began : " O fruit ! that wast alone  
Mature, when first engender'd ; ancient father !  
That doubly seest in every wedded bride  
Thy daughter, by affinity and blood ;  
Devoutly as I may, I pray thee hold  
Converse with me : my will thou seest : and I,  
More speedily to hear thee, tell it not."

It chanceth oft some animal bewrays,  
Through the sleek covering of his furry coat,  
The fondness, that stirs in him, and conforms  
His outside seeming to the cheer within :  
And in like guise was Adam's spirit moved  
To joyous mood, that through the covering shone,  
Transparent, when to pleasure me it spake :  
" No need thy will be told, which I untold  
Better discern, than thou whatever thing  
Thou hold'st most certain : for that will I see  
In Him, who is truth's mirror ; and Himself,  
Parhelion<sup>2</sup> unto all things, and nought else,  
To Him. This wouldst thou hear : how long since,  
God

Placed me in that high garden, from whose bounds  
She led me up this ladder, steep and long ;  
What space endured my season of delight ;  
Whence truly sprang the wrath that banish'd me ;  
And what the language, which I spake and framed.  
Not that I tasted of the tree, my son,  
Was in itself the cause of that exile,

<sup>1</sup> *The first living soul.*] Adam.    <sup>2</sup> *Parhelion.*] Who enlightens  
and comprehends all things ; but is himself enlightened and compre-  
hended by none.



But only my transgressing of the mark  
Assign'd me. There, whence <sup>1</sup> at thy lady's hest  
The Mantuan moved him, still was I debarr'd  
This council, till the sun had made complete,  
Four thousand and three hundred rounds and twice,  
His annual journey ; and, through every light  
In his broad pathway, saw I him return,  
Thousand save seventy times, the whilst I dwelt  
Upon the earth. The language <sup>2</sup> I did use  
Was worn away, or ever Nimrod's race  
Their unaccomplishable work began.  
For nought, that man inclines to, e'er was lasting ;  
Left by his reason free, and variable  
As is the sky that sways him. That he speaks,  
Is nature's prompting : whether thus, or thus,  
She leaves to you, as ye do most affect it.  
Ere I descended into hell's abyss,  
El <sup>3</sup> was the name on earth of the Chief Good,  
Whose joy enfolds me : Eli then 'twas call'd.  
And so beseemeth : for, in mortals, use <sup>4</sup>  
Is as the leaf upon the bough : that goes,  
And other comes instead. Upon the mount  
Most high above the waters, all my life,<sup>5</sup>  
Both innocent and guilty, did but reach  
From the first hour, to that which cometh next  
(As the sun changes quarter) to the sixth."

<sup>1</sup> *Whence.*] That is, from Limbo. See *Inferno*, Canto ii. 53. Adam says that 5232 years elapsed from his creation to the time of his deliverance, which followed the death of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> *The language.*] *Hac forma locutionis locutus est Adam, hac forma locuti sunt omnes posterij ejus usque ad ædificationem turris Babel. De Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. cap. vi.* "This form of speech Adam used ; this, all his posterity until the building of the tower of Babel."

<sup>3</sup> *El.*] Some read *Un*, "One," instead of *El* : but the latter of these readings is confirmed by a passage from Dante's *Treatise de Vulg. Eloq. lib. i. cap. iv.* "Quod prius vox primi loquentis sonaverit, viro sanæ mentis in promptu esse non dubito ipsum fuisse quod Deus est, videlicet *El*." St. Isidore in the *Origines*, lib. vii. cap. i. had said, "Primum apud Hebræos Dei nomen *El* dicitur."

<sup>4</sup> *Use.*] From Horace, *Ars. Poet.* 62. <sup>5</sup> *All my life.*]

"I remained in the terrestrial Paradise only to the seventh hour." In the *Historia Scolastica* of Petrus Comestor, it is said of our first parents : "Quidam tradunt eos fuisse in Paradiso septem horas." *F. 9, ed. Par. 1513, 4to.*

## CANTO XXVII

## ARGUMENT

St. Peter bitterly rebukes the covetousness of his successors in the apostolic see, while all the heavenly host sympathise in his indignation: they then vanish upwards. Beatrice bids Dante again cast his view below. Afterwards they are borne into the ninth heaven, of which she shows him the nature and properties; blaming the perverseness of man, who places his will on low and perishable things.

THEN "Glory to the Father, to the Son,  
And to the Holy Spirit," rang aloud  
Throughout all Paradise; that with the song  
My spirit reel'd, so passing sweet the strain.  
And what I saw was equal ecstasy:  
One universal smile it seem'd of all things;  
Joy past compare; gladness unutterable;  
Imperishable life of peace and love;  
Exhaustless riches, and unmeasured bliss.

Before mine eyes stood the four torches lit: <sup>1</sup>  
And that, <sup>2</sup> which first had come, began to wax  
In brightness; and, in semblance, such became,  
As Jove might be, if he and Mars were birds,  
And interchanged their plumes. Silence ensued,  
Through the blest quire; by Him, who here appoints  
Vicissitude of ministry, enjoin'd;  
When thus I heard: "Wonder not, if my hue  
Be changed; for, while I speak, these shalt thou see  
All in like manner change with me. My place  
He <sup>3</sup> who usurps on earth (my place, ay, mine,  
Which in the presence of the Son of God  
Is void), the same hath made my cemetery  
A common sewer of puddle and of blood:  
The more below his triumph, who from hence  
Malignant fell." Such colour, <sup>4</sup> as the sun,

<sup>1</sup> *Four torches.*] St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and Adam.    <sup>2</sup> *That.*] St. Peter, who looked as the planet Jupiter would, if it assumed the sanguine appearance of Mars.    <sup>3</sup> *He.*] Boniface VIII.

<sup>4</sup> *Such colour.*] Qui color infectis adversi solis ab ictu  
Nubibus esse solet; aut purpureæ Auroræ.

Ovid, *Metam.* lib. iii. 184.

At eve or morning, paints an adverse cloud,  
 Then saw I sprinkled over all the sky.  
 And as the unblemish'd dame, who, in herself  
 Secure of censure, yet at bare report  
 Of other's failing, shrinks with maiden fear ;  
 So Beatrice, in her semblance, changed :  
 And such eclipse in heaven, methinks, was seen,  
 When the Most Holy suffer'd. Then the words  
 Proceeded, with voice, alter'd from itself  
 So clean, the semblance did not alter more.  
 " Not to this end was Christ's spouse with my blood,  
 With that of Linus, and of Cletus,<sup>1</sup> fed ;  
 That she might serve for purchase of base gold :  
 But for the purchase of this happy life,  
 Did Sixtus, Pius, and Calixtus bleed,  
 And Urban ; <sup>2</sup> they, whose doom was not without  
 Much weeping seal'd. No purpose was of ours,<sup>3</sup>  
 That on the right hand of our successors,  
 Part of the Christian people should be set,  
 And part upon their left ; nor that the keys,  
 Which were vouchsafed me, should for ensign serve  
 Unto the banners, that do levy war  
 On the baptized : nor I, for sigil-mark,  
 Set upon sold and lying privileges :  
 Which makes me oft to bicker and turn red.  
 In shepherd's clothing, greedy wolves below  
 Range wide o'er all the pastures. Arm of God !  
 Why longer sleep'st thou ? Cahorsines and Gascons <sup>4</sup>  
 Prepare to quaff our blood. O good beginning !  
 To what a vile conclusion must thou stoop.  
 But the high providence, which did defend,

<sup>1</sup> *Of Linus, and of Cletus.*] Bishops of Rome in the first century.

<sup>2</sup> *Did Sixtus, Pius, and Calixtus bleed,*

*And Urban.*] The former two, bishops of the same see, in the second ; and the others, in the fourth century. <sup>3</sup> *No purpose was of*

*ours.*] " We did not intend that our successors should take any part in the political divisions among Christians ; or that my figure (the seal of St. Peter) should serve as a mark to authorise iniquitous grants and privileges." <sup>4</sup> *Cahorsines and Gascons.*] He alludes to Jacques d'Ossa, a native of Cahors, who filled the papal chair in 1316, after it

had been two years vacant, and assumed the name of John xxii., and to Clement v., a Gascon, of whom see *Inferno*, Canto xix. 86, and note.

Through Scipio, the world's empery for Rome,  
 Will not delay its succour: and thou, son,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who through thy mortal weight shalt yet again  
 Return below, open thy lips, nor hide  
 What is by me not hidden." As a flood  
 Of frozen vapours streams adown the air,  
 What time the she-goat<sup>2</sup> with her skiey horn  
 Touches the sun; so saw I there stream wide  
 The vapours, who with us had linger'd late,  
 And with glad triumph deck the ethereal cope.  
 Onward my sight their semblances pursued;  
 So far pursued, as till the space between  
 From its reach sever'd them: whereat the guide  
 Celestial, marking me no more intent  
 On upward gazing, said, "Look down, and see  
 What circuit thou hast compast." From the hour<sup>3</sup>  
 When I before had cast my view beneath,  
 All the first region overpast I saw,  
 Which from the midmost to the boundary winds,  
 That onward, thence, from Gades,<sup>4</sup> I beheld  
 The unwise passage of Laertes' son;  
 And hitherward the shore<sup>5</sup> where thou, Europa,  
 Madest thee a joyful burden; and yet more  
 Of this dim spot had seen, but that the sun,<sup>6</sup>  
 A constellation off and more, had ta'en  
 His progress in the zodiac underneath.

Then by the spirit, that doth never leave  
 Its amorous dalliance with my lady's looks,  
 Back with redoubled ardour were mine eyes  
 Led unto her: and from her radiant smiles,

<sup>1</sup> *Thou son.*] Beatus Petrus—multaque locutus est, et docuit me de veteri testamento, de hominibus etiam adhuc in seculo adhuc viventibus plura peccata intonuit mihi, precepitque, ut ea quæ de illis audieram eis referrem. Alberici, Visio, § 45. <sup>2</sup> *The she-goat.*] When the sun is in Capricorn. <sup>3</sup> *From the hour.*] Since he had last looked (see Canto xxii.) he perceived that he had past from the meridian circle to the eastern horizon; the half of our hemisphere, and a quarter of the heaven. <sup>4</sup> *From Gades.*] See Inferno, Canto xxvi. 106. <sup>5</sup> *The shore.*] Phœnicia, where Europa, the daughter of Agenor, mounted on the back of Jupiter, in his shape of a bull. <sup>6</sup> *The sun.*] Dante was in the constellation of Gemini, and the sun in Aries. There was, therefore, part of those two constellations, and the whole of Taurus, between them.

Whenas I turn'd me, pleasure so divine  
 Did lighten on me, that whatever bait  
 Or art or nature in the human flesh,  
 Or in its limn'd resemblance, can combine  
 Through greedy eyes to take the soul withal,  
 Were, to her beauty, nothing. Its boon influence  
 From the fair nest of Leda<sup>1</sup> rapt me forth,  
 And wafted on into the swiftest heaven.

What place for entrance Beatrice chose,  
 I may not say ; so uniform was all,  
 Liveliest and loftiest. She my secret wish  
 Divined ; and, with such gladness, that God's love  
 Seem'd from her visage shining, thus began :  
 " Here is the goal, whence motion on his race  
 Starts : motionless the centre, and the rest  
 All moved around. Except the soul divine,  
 Place in this heaven is none ; the soul divine,  
 Wherein the love, which ruleth o'er its orb,  
 Is kindled, and the virtue, that it sheds :  
 One circle, light and love, enclasping it,  
 As this doth clasp the others ; and to Him,  
 Who draws the bound, its limit only known.  
 Measured itself by none, it doth divide  
 Motion to all, counted unto them forth,  
 As by the fifth or half ye count forth ten.  
 The vase, wherein time's roots<sup>2</sup> are plunged, thou seest,  
 Look elsewhere for the leaves. O mortal lust !  
 That canst not lift thy head above the waves  
 Which whelm and sink thee down. The will in man  
 Bears goodly blossoms ; but its ruddy promise  
 Is, by the dripping of perpetual rain,  
 Made mere abortion : faith and innocence  
 Are met with but in babes ; each taking leave,  
 Ere cheeks with down are sprinkled : he, that fasts

<sup>1</sup> *The fair nest of Leda.*] " From the Gemini " ; thus called, because Leda was the mother of the twins, Castor and Pollux. <sup>2</sup> *Time's roots.*] " Here," says Beatrice, " are the roots, from whence time springs : for the parts, into which it is divided, the other heavens must be considered." And she then breaks out into an exclamation on the degeneracy of human nature, which does not lift itself to the contemplation of divine things.

While yet a stammerer, with his tongue let loose  
 Gluts every food alike in every moon :  
 One, yet a babbler, loves and listens to  
 His mother ; but no sooner hath free use  
 Of speech, than he doth wish her in her grave.  
 So suddenly doth the fair child of him,<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose welcome is the morn and eve his parting,  
 To negro blackness change her virgin white.

“Thou, to abate thy wonder, note, that none<sup>2</sup>  
 Bears rule in earth ; and its frail family  
 Are therefore wanderers. Yet before the date,<sup>3</sup>  
 When, through the hundredth in his reckoning dropt,  
 Pale January must be shoved aside  
 From winter's calendar, these heavenly spheres  
 Shall roar so loud, that fortune shall be fain,<<sup>4</sup>  
 To turn the poop, where she hath now the prow ;  
 So that the fleet run onward : and true fruit,  
 Expected long, shall crown at last the bloom.”

<sup>1</sup> *The fair child of him.*] There is something very similar in our Author's Treatise de Monarchiâ, lib. i. p. 104. “Humanum genus filius est coeli quod est perfectissimum in omni opere suo. Generat enim homo hominem et sol juxta secundum in Naturali Auditu.” This, therefore, is intended for a philosophical truth, and not for a figure, as when Pindar calls “the day” “child of the sun”:

Ἀμείραν

— παῖδ' Ἀλίου. Ol. ii. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *None.*] Because, as has been before said, the shepherds are become wolves. <sup>3</sup> *Before the date.*] “Before many ages are past ; before those fractions, which are dropt in the reckoning of every year, shall amount to so large a portion of time, that January shall be no more a winter month.” By this periphrasis is meant “in a short time” ; as we say familiarly, such a thing will happen before a thousand years are over, when we mean, it will happen soon.

<sup>4</sup> *Fortune shall be fain.*] The commentators, in general, suppose, that our Poet here augurs that great reform, which he vainly hoped would follow on the arrival of the Emperor Henry vii. in Italy. Lombardi refers the prognostication to Can Grande della Scala : and when we consider that this Canto was not finished till after the death of Henry, as appears from the mention that is made of John xxii., it cannot be denied but the conjecture is probable. Troya (Veltro Allegorico, p. 186) suggests Matteo Visconti, or Castruccio Castracani, as the expected reformer.

Sept 19-1839



## CANTO XXVIII

## ARGUMENT

Still in the ninth heaven, our Poet is permitted to behold the divine essence; and then sees, in three hierarchies, the nine choirs of angels. Beatrice clears some difficulties which occur to him on this occasion.

So she, who doth imparadise my soul,  
 Had drawn the veil from off our present life,  
 And bared the truth of poor mortality;  
 When lo! as one who, in a mirror, spies  
 The shining of a flambeau at his back,  
 Lit sudden ere he deem of its approach,  
 And turneth to resolve him, if the glass  
 Have told him true, and sees the record faithful  
 As note is to its metre; even thus,  
 I well remember, did befall to me,  
 Looking upon the beauteous eyes, whence love  
 Had made the leash to take me. As I turn'd:  
 And that which none, who in that volume <sup>1</sup> looks,  
 Can miss of, in itself apparent, struck  
 My view; a point I saw, that darted light  
 So sharp, no lid, unclosing, may bear up  
 Against its keenness. The least star we ken  
 From hence, had seem'd a moon; set by its side,  
 As star by side of star. And so far off,  
 Perchance, as is the halo from the light  
 Which paints it, when most dense the vapour spreads;  
 There wheel'd about the point a circle of fire,  
 More rapid than the motion which surrounds,  
 Speediest, the world. Another this enring'd;  
 And that a third; the third a fourth, and that  
 A fifth encompass'd; which a sixth next bound;  
 And over this, a seventh, following, reach'd  
 Circumference so ample, that its bow,  
 Within the span of Juno's messenger,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *That volume.*] The ninth heaven; as Vellutello, I think, rightly interprets it. <sup>2</sup> Editor's note: *Juno's messenger.*] Iris, the rainbow.

Had scarce been held entire. Beyond the seventh,  
 Ensued yet other two. And every one,  
 As more in number distant from the first,  
 Was tardier in motion : and that glow'd  
 With flame most pure, that to the sparkle of truth,  
 Was nearest ; as partaking most, methinks,  
 Of its reality. The guide beloved  
 Saw me in anxious thought suspense, and spake :  
 " Heaven, and all nature, hangs upon that point <sup>1</sup>  
 The circle thereto most conjoin'd observe ;  
 And know, that by intenser love its course  
 Is, to this swiftness, wing'd." To whom I thus :  
 " It were enough ; nor should I further seek,  
 Had I but witness'd order, in the world  
 Appointed, such as in these wheels is seen.  
 But in the sensible world such difference <sup>2</sup> is,  
 That in each round shows more divinity,  
 As each is wider from the centre. Hence,  
 If in this wondrous and angelic temple,  
 That hath, for confine, only light and love,  
 My wish may have completion, I must know,  
 Wherefore such disagreement is between  
 The exemplar and its copy : for myself,  
 Contemplating, I fail to pierce the cause."  
 " It is no marvel, if thy fingers foil'd  
 Do leave the knot untied : so hard 'tis grown  
 For want of tenting." Thus she said : " But take,"  
 She added, " if thou wish thy cure, my words,

<sup>1</sup> *Heaven, and all nature hangs upon that point.*] ἐν ταύτης ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς ἤρτηται ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ φύσις. Aristot., *Metaph.* lib. xii. c. 7. "From that beginning depend heaven and nature." <sup>2</sup> *Such difference.*] The material world and the intelligential (the copy and the pattern) appear to Dante to differ in this respect, that the orbits of the latter are more swift, the nearer they are to the centre, whereas the contrary is the case with the orbits of the former. The seeming contradiction is thus accounted for by Beatrice. In the material world, the more ample the body is, the greater is the good, of which it is capable ; supposing all the parts to be equally perfect. But in the intelligential world, the circles are more excellent and powerful, the more they approximate to the central point, which is God. Thus the first circle, that of the seraphim, corresponds to the ninth sphere, or primum mobile ; the second, that of the cherubim, to the eighth sphere, or heaven of fixed stars ; the third, or circle of thrones, to the seventh sphere, or planet of Saturn ; and in like manner throughout the two other trines of circles and spheres.

And entertain them subtly. Every orb,  
Corporeal, doth proportion its extent  
Unto the virtue through its parts diffused.  
The greater blessedness preserves the more.  
The greater is the body (if all parts  
Share equally) the more is to preserve.  
Therefore the circle, whose swift course enwheels  
The universal frame, answers to that  
Which is supreme in knowledge and in love.  
Thus by the virtue, not the seeming breadth  
Of substance, measuring, thou shalt see the heavens,  
Each to the intelligence that ruleth it,  
Greater to more, and smaller unto less,  
Suited in strict and wondrous harmony."

As when the north <sup>1</sup> blows from his milder cheek  
A blast, that scours the sky, forthwith our air,  
Clear'd of the rack that hung on it before,  
Glitters; and, with his beauties all unveil'd,  
The firmament looks forth serene, and smiles:  
Such was my cheer, when Beatrice drove  
With clear reply the shadows back, and truth  
Was manifested, as a star in heaven.  
And when the words were ended, not unlike  
To iron in the furnace, every cirque,  
Ebullient, shot forth scintillating fires:  
And every sparkle shivering to new blaze,  
In number <sup>2</sup> did outmillion the account  
Reduplicate upon the chequer'd board.  
Then heard I echoing on, from choir to choir,  
"Hosanna," to the fixed point, that holds,  
And shall for ever hold them to their place,  
From everlasting, irremovable.

Musing awhile I stood: and she, who saw  
My inward meditations, thus began:

<sup>1</sup> *The north.* By "ond' è più leno," some understand that point from whence "the wind is mildest"; others, that "in which there is most force." The former interpretation is probably right.

<sup>2</sup> *In number.*] The sparkles exceeded the number which would be produced by the sixty-four squares of a chess-board, if for the first we reckoned one; for the next, two; for the third, four; and so went on doubling to the end of the account.

" In the first circles, they, whom thou beheld'st  
 Are seraphim and cherubim. Thus swift  
 Follow their hoops, in likeness to the point,  
 Near as they can, approaching ; and they can  
 The more, the loftier their vision. Those  
 That round them fleet, gazing the Godhead next,  
 Are thrones ; in whom the first trine ends. And all  
 Are blessed, even as their sight descends  
 Deeper into the truth, wherein rest is  
 For every mind. Thus happiness hath root  
 In seeing, not in loving, which of sight  
 Is aftergrowth. And of the seeing such  
 The meed, as unto each, in due degree,  
 Grace and good-will their measure have assign'd.  
 The other trine, that with still opening buds  
 In this eternal springtide blossom fair,  
 Fearless of bruising from the nightly ram,<sup>1</sup>  
 Breathe up in warbled melodies threefold  
 Hosannas, blending ever ; from the three,  
 Transmitted, hierarchy of gods, for aye  
 Rejoicing ; dominations first ; next them,  
 Virtues ; and powers the third ; the next to whom  
 Are principdoms and archangels, with glad round  
 To tread their festal ring ; and last, the band  
 Angelical, disporting in their sphere.  
 All as they circle in their orders, look  
 Aloft ; and, downward, with such sway prevail,  
 That all with mutual impulse tend to God.  
 These once a mortal view beheld. Desire,  
 In Dionysius,<sup>2</sup> so intensely wrought,  
 That he, as I have done, ranged them ; and named  
 Their orders, marshal'd in his thought. From him,  
 Dissentient, one refused his sacred rede.  
 But soon as in this heaven his doubting eyes  
 Were open'd, Gregory<sup>3</sup> at his error smiled.

<sup>1</sup> *Fearless of bruising from the nightly ram.*] Not injured, like the productions of our spring, by the influence of autumn, when the constellation Aries rises at sunset. <sup>2</sup> *Dionysius.*] The Areopagite, in his book *De Cœlesti Hierarchiâ*. <sup>3</sup> *Gregory.*] Gregory the Great. "Novem vero angelorum ordines liximus ; quia videlicet esse, testante sacro eloquio, scimus : Angelos, archangelos, virtutes, potestates,

Nor marvel, that a denizen of earth  
Should scan such secret truth ; for he had learnt <sup>1</sup>  
Both this and much beside of these our orbs,  
From an eye-witness to heaven's mysteries."

## CANTO XXIX

## ARGUMENT

Beatrice beholds, in the mirror of divine truth, some doubts which had entered the mind of Dante. These she resolves ; and then digresses into a vehement reprehension of certain theologians and preachers in those days, whose ignorance or avarice induced them to substitute their own inventions for the pure word of the Gospel.

No longer,<sup>2</sup> than what time Latona's twins  
Cover'd of Libra and the fleecy star,  
Together both, girding the horizon hang ;  
In even balance, from the zenith poised ;  
Till from that verge, each, changing hemisphere,  
Part the nice level ; e'en so brief a space  
Did Beatrice's silence hold. A smile  
Sat painted on her cheek ; and her fix'd gaze  
Bent on the point, at which my vision fail'd :  
When thus, her words resuming, she began :  
" I speak, nor what thou wouldst inquire, demand ;  
For I have mark'd it, where all time and place  
Are present. Not for increase to Himself  
Of good, which may not be increased, but forth  
To manifest His glory by its beams ;  
Inhabiting His own eternity,  
Beyond time's limit or what bound soe'er  
To circumscribe His being ; as He will'd,  
Into new natures, like unto Himself,  
Eternal love unfolded : nor before,

principatus, dominationes, thronos, cherubin atque seraphin." Divi Gregorii, Hom. xxxiv. f. 125, ed. Par. 1518, fol.

<sup>1</sup> *He had learnt.*] Dionysius, he says, had learnt from St. Paul.  
<sup>2</sup> *No longer.*] As short a space, as the sun and moon are in changing hemispheres, when they are opposite to one another, the one under the sign of Aries, and the other under that of Libra, and both hang, for a moment, poised as it were in the hand of the zenith.

As if in dull inaction, torpid, lay,  
 For, not in process of before or aft,<sup>1</sup>  
 Upon these waters moved the Spirit of God.  
 Simple and mix'd, both form and substance,<sup>2</sup> forth  
 To perfect being started, like three darts  
 Shot from a bow three-corded. And as ray  
 In crystal, glass, and amber, shines entire,  
 E'en at the moment of its issuing; thus  
 Did, from the eternal Sovran, beam entire  
 His threefold operation,<sup>3</sup> at one act  
 Produced coeval. Yet, in order, each  
 Created his due station knew: those highest,  
 Who pure intelligence were made; mere power,  
 The lowest; in the midst, bound with strict league,  
 Intelligence and power, unsever'd bond.  
 Long tract of ages by the angels past,  
 Ere the creating of another world,  
 Described on Jerome's pages,<sup>4</sup> thou hast seen.  
 But that what I disclose to thee is true.  
 Those penmen,<sup>5</sup> whom the Holy Spirit moved,  
 In many a passage of their sacred book,  
 Attest; as thou by diligent search shalt find:  
 And reason,<sup>6</sup> in some sort, discerns the same,  
 Who scarce would grant the heavenly ministers,  
 Of their perfection void, so long a space.  
 Thus when and where the spirits of love were made,  
 Thou know'st, and how: and, knowing, hast allay'd

<sup>1</sup> *For, not in process of before or aft.*] There was neither "before nor after," no distinction, that is, of time, till the creation of the world.  
<sup>2</sup> *Simple and mix'd, both form and substance.*] Simple and unmixed form answers to "pure intelligence," v. 33 (*puro atto*), the highest of created being; simple and unmixed substance, to "mere power," v. 33 (*pura potenza*), the lowest; and form mixed with substance, to "intelligence and power," v. 35 (*potenzia con atto*), that which holds the middle place between the other two. <sup>3</sup> *His threefold operation.*] He means that spiritual beings, brute matter, and the intermediate part of the creation which participates both of spirit and matter, were produced at once. <sup>4</sup> *On Jerome's pages.*] St. Jerome had described the angels as created long before the rest of the universe, an opinion which Thomas Aquinas controverted; and the latter, as Dante thinks, had Scripture on his side. <sup>5</sup> *Those penmen.*] As in Gen. i. 1, and Eccles. xviii. 1. <sup>6</sup> *Reason.*] The heavenly ministers (*motori*) would have existed to no purpose if they had been created before the corporeal world, which they were to govern.



Thy thirst, which from the triple question<sup>1</sup> rose.  
 Ere one had reckon'd twenty, e'en so soon,  
 Part of the angels fell : and, in their fall,  
 Confusion to your elements ensued.  
 The others kept their station : and this task,  
 Whereon thou look'st, began, with such delight,  
 That they surcease not ever, day nor night,  
 Their circling. Of that fatal lapse the cause  
 Was the curst pride of him, whom thou hast seen  
 Pent<sup>2</sup> with the world's incumbrance. Those, whom  
 here

Thou seest, were lowly to confess themselves  
 Of his free bounty, who had made them apt  
 For ministries so high : therefore their views  
 Were, by enlightening grace and their own merit,  
 Exalted ; so that in their will confirm'd  
 They stand, nor fear to fall. For do not doubt,  
 But to receive the grace, which Heaven vouchsafes,  
 Is meritorious, even as the soul  
 With prompt affection welcometh the guest.  
 Now, without further help, if with good heed  
 My words thy mind have treasured, thou henceforth  
 This consistory round about mayst scan,  
 And gaze thy fill. But, since thou hast on earth  
 Heard vain disputers, reasoners in the schools,  
 Canvass the angelic nature, and dispute  
 Its power of apprehension, memory, choice ;  
 Therefore, 'tis well thou take from me the truth,  
 Pure and without disguise ; which they below,  
 Equivocating, darken and perplex.

“ Know thou, that, from the first, these substances,  
 Rejoicing in the countenance of God,  
 Have held unceasingly their view, intent  
 Upon the glorious vision, from the which  
 Nought absent is nor hid : where then no change  
 Of newness, with succession, interrupts,  
 Remembrance, there, needs none to gather up

<sup>1</sup> *The triple question.*] He had wished to know where, when, and how the angels had been created, and these three questions had been resolved.

<sup>2</sup> *Pent.*] See *Inferno*, Canto xxxiv. 105.

Divided thought and images remote ;

“ So that men, thus at variance with the truth,  
Dream, though their eyes be open ; reckless some  
Of error ; others well aware they err,  
To whom more guilt and shame are justly due.  
Each the known track of sage philosophy  
Deserts, and has a by-way of his own :  
So much the restless eagerness to shine.  
And love of singularity, prevail.  
Yet this, offensive as it is, provokes  
Heaven’s anger less, than when the book of God  
Is forced to yield to man’s authority,  
Or from its straightness warp’d : no reckoning made  
What blood the sowing of it in the world  
Has cost ; what favour for himself he wins,  
Who meekly clings to it. The aim of all  
Is how to shine : e’en they, whose office is  
To preach the Gospel, let the Gospel sleep,  
And pass their own inventions off instead.  
One tells, how at Christ’s suffering the wan moon  
Bent back her steps, and shadow’d o’er the sun  
With intervenient disk, as she withdrew :  
Another, how the light shrouded itself  
Within its tabernacle, and left dark  
The Spaniard, and the Indian, with the Jew.  
Such fables Florence in her pulpit hears,  
Bandied about more frequent, than the names  
Of Bindi and of Lapi <sup>1</sup> in her streets.  
The sheep, meanwhile, poor witless ones, return  
From pasture, fed with wind : and what avails  
For their excuse, they do not see their harm ?  
Christ said not to His first conventicle,  
‘ Go forth and preach impostures to the world,’  
But gave them truth <sup>2</sup> to build on ; and the sound  
Was mighty on their lips : nor needed they,  
Beside the Gospel, other spear or shield,  
To aid them in their warfare for the faith.

<sup>1</sup> *Of Bindi and of Lapi.*] Common names of men at Florence.  
<sup>2</sup> *Gave them truth.*] “ Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Mark, xvi. 15.

The preacher now provides himself with store  
 Of jests and gibes ; and, so there be no lack  
 Of laughter, while he vents them, his big cowl  
 Distends, and he has won the meed he sought :  
 Could but the vulgar catch a glimpse the while  
 Of that dark bird which nestles in his hood,  
 They scarce would wait to hear the blessing said,  
 Which now the dotards hold in such esteem,  
 That every counterfeit, who spreads abroad  
 The hands of holy promise, finds a throng  
 Of credulous fools beneath. Saint Anthony  
 Fattens with this his swine,<sup>1</sup> and others worse  
 Than swine, who diet at his lazy board,  
 Paying with unstampt metal<sup>2</sup> for their fare.

“ But (for we far have wander'd) let us seek  
 The forward path again ; so as the way  
 Be shorten'd with the time. No mortal tongue,  
 Nor thought of man, hath ever reach'd so far,  
 That of these natures he might count the tribes.  
 What Daniel<sup>3</sup> of their thousands hath reveal'd,  
 With finite number, infinite conceals.  
 The fountain, at whose source these drink their beams  
 With light supplies them in as many modes,  
 As there are splendours that it shines on : each  
 According to the virtue it conceives,  
 Differing in love and sweet affection.  
 Look then how lofty and how huge in breadth  
 The eternal might, which, broken and dispersed  
 Over such countless mirrors, yet remains  
 Whole in itself and one, as at the first.”

<sup>1</sup> *Fattens with this his swine.*] On the sale of these blessings, the brothers of St. Anthony supported themselves. From behind the swine of St. Anthony, our Poet levels a blow at the object of his inveterate enmity, Boniface VIII., from whom, “in 1297, they obtained the dignity and privileges of an independent congregation.” See Mosheim's Eccles. History, in Dr. MacLaine's translation, v. ii. cent. xi. p. ii. c. ii. § 28. <sup>2</sup> *With unstampt metal.*] With false indulgences. <sup>3</sup> *Daniel.*] “Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.” Dan. vii. 10.

## CANTO XXX

## ARGUMENT

Dante is taken up with Beatrice into the empyrean ; and there having his sight strengthened by her aid, and by the virtue derived from looking on the river of light, he sees the triumph of the angels and of the souls of the blessed.

Noon's fervid hour perchance six thousand miles <sup>1</sup>  
 From hence is distant ; and the shadowy cone  
 Almost to level on our earth declines ;  
 When, from the midmost of this blue abyss,  
 By turns some star is to our vision lost.  
 And straightway as the handmaid of the sun  
 Puts forth her radiant brow, all, light by light,  
 Fade ; and the spangled firmament shuts in,  
 E'en to the loveliest of the glittering throng.  
 Thus vanish'd gradually from my sight  
 The triumph, which plays ever round the point,  
 That overcame me, seeming (for it did)  
 Engirt <sup>2</sup> by that it girdeth. Wherefore love,  
 With loss of other object, forced me bend  
 Mine eyes on Beatrice once again.

If all, that hitherto is told of her,  
 Were in one praise concluded, 'twere too weak  
 To furnish out this turn.<sup>3</sup> Mine eyes did look  
 On beauty, such, as I believe in sooth,  
 Not merely to exceed our human ; but,  
 That save its Maker, none can to the full  
 Enjoy it. At this point o'erpower'd I fail ;  
 Unequal to my theme ; as never bard  
 Of buskin or of sock hath fail'd before.  
 For as the sun doth to the feeblest sight,  
 E'en so remembrance of that witching smile  
 Hath dispossesst my spirit of itself.

<sup>1</sup> *Six thousand miles.*] He compares the vanishing of the vision to the fading away of the stars at dawn, when it is noon-day six thousand miles off, and the shadow, formed by the earth over the part of it inhabited by the Poet, is about to disappear. <sup>2</sup> *Engirt.*] "Appearing to be encompassed by these angelic bands, which are in reality encompassed by it." <sup>3</sup> *This turn.*] Questa vice.

Not from that day, when on this earth I first  
Beheld her charms, up to that view of them,  
Have I with song applausive ever ceased  
To follow ; but now follow them no more ;  
My course here bounded, as each artist's is,  
When it doth touch the limit of his skill.

She (such as I bequeath her to the bruit  
Of louder trump than mine, which hasteneth on  
Urging its arduous matter to the close)  
Her words resumed, in gesture and in voice  
Resembling one accustom'd to command :  
"Forth <sup>1</sup> from the last corporeal are we come  
Into the heaven, that is unbodied light ;  
Light intellectual, replete with love,  
Love of true happiness, replete with joy ;  
Joy, that transcends all sweetness of delight.  
Here shalt thou look on either mighty host <sup>2</sup>  
Of Paradise ; and one in that array,  
Which in the final judgment thou shalt see."

As when the lightning, in a sudden spleen  
Unfolded, dashes from the blinding eyes  
The visive spirits, dazzled and bedimm'd ;  
So, round about me, fulminating streams  
Of living radiance play'd, and left me swathed  
And veil'd in dense impenetrable blaze.  
Such weal is in the love, that stills this heaven ;  
For its own flame <sup>3</sup> the torch thus fitting ever.

No sooner to my listening ear had come  
The brief assurance, than I understood  
New virtue into me infused, and sight  
Kindled afresh, with vigour to sustain  
Excess of light however pure. I look'd ;  
And, in the likeness of a river, saw  
Light flowing, <sup>4</sup> from whose amber-seeming waves

<sup>1</sup> *Forth*.] From the ninth sphere to the empyrean, which is mere light. <sup>2</sup> *Either mighty host*.] Of angels, that remained faithful, and of beatified souls ; the latter in that shape which they will have at the last day. <sup>3</sup> *For its own flame*.] Thus disposing the spirits to receive its own beatific light. <sup>4</sup> *Light flowing*.] "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev. xxii. 1.

Flash'd up effulgence, as they glided on  
'Twixt banks, on either side, painted with spring,  
Incredible how fair : and, from the tide,  
There ever and anon, outstarting, flew  
Sparkles instinct with life ; and in the flowers  
Did set them, like to rubies chased in gold :  
Then, as if drunk with odours, plunged again  
Into the wondrous flood ; from which, as one  
Re-enter'd, still another rose. " The thirst  
Of knowledge high, whereby thou art inflamed,  
To search the meaning of what here thou seest,  
The more it warms thee, pleases me the more.  
But first behoves thee of this water drink,  
Or e'er that longing be allay'd." So spake  
The day-star of mine eyes : then thus subjoin'd :  
" This stream ; and these, forth issuing from its  
gulf,

And diving back, a living topaz each ;  
With all this laughter on its bloomy shores ;  
Are but a preface, shadowy of the truth  
They emblem : not that, in themselves, the things  
Are crude ; but on thy part is the defect,  
For that thy views not yet aspire so high."

Never did babe that had outslept his wont,  
Rush, with such eager straining, to the milk,  
As I toward the water ; bending me,  
To make the better mirrors of mine eyes  
In the refining wave : and as the eaves  
Of mine eyelids did drink of it, forthwith  
Seem'd it unto me turn'd from length to round.  
Then as a troop of maskers, when they put  
Their vizors off, look other than before ;  
The counterfeited semblance thrown aside :  
So into greater jubilee were changed  
Those flowers and sparkles ; and distinct I saw,  
Before me, either court <sup>1</sup> of heaven display'd.

O prime enlightener ! thou who gavest me strength  
On the high triumph of thy realm to gaze ;  
Grant virtue now to utter what I kenn'd.

<sup>1</sup> *Either court.*] See note to v. 44.



There is in heaven a light, whose goodly shine  
Makes the Creator visible to all  
Created, that in seeing Him alone  
Have peace ; and in a circle spreads so far,  
That the circumference were too loose a zone  
To girdle in the sun. All is one beam,  
Reflected from the summit of the first,  
That moves, which being hence and vigour takes.  
And as some cliff, that from the bottom eyes  
His image mirror'd in the crystal flood,  
As if to admire his brave appareling  
Of verdure and of flowers ; so, round about,  
Eying the light, on more than million thrones,  
Stood, eminent, whatever from our earth  
Has to the skies return'd. How wide the leaves,  
Extended to their utmost, of this rose,  
Whose lowest step embosoms such a space  
Of ample radiance ! Yet, nor amplitude  
Nor height impeded, but my view with ease  
Took in the full dimensions of that joy.  
Near or remote, what there avails, where God  
Immediate rules, and Nature, awed, suspends  
Her sway ? Into the yellow of the rose  
Perennial, which, in bright expansiveness,  
Lays forth its gradual blooming, redolent  
Of praises to the never-wintering sun,  
As one, who fain would speak yet holds his peace,  
Beatrice led me ; and, " Behold," she said,  
" This fair assemblage ; stoles of snowy white,  
How numberless. The city, where we dwell,  
Behold how vast ; and these our seats so throng'd,  
Few now are wanting here. In that proud stall,<sup>1</sup>  
On which, the crown, already o'er its state  
Suspended, holds thine eyes—or e'er thyself  
Mayst at the wedding sup,—shall rest the soul  
Of the great Harry,<sup>2</sup> he who, by the world

<sup>1</sup> *In that proud stall.*] " Ostenditque mihi circa Paradisum lectum claris et splendidissimis operimentis adornatum—in quo lecto quendam jacere conspexi cujus nomen ab Apostolo audivi, sed prohibuit ne cui illud dicerem." Alberici, Visio, § 31. <sup>2</sup> *Of the great Harry.*] The Emperor Henry VII. who died in 1313. " Henry, Count of Luxemburg,

Augustus hail'd, to Italy must come,  
 Before her day be ripe. But ye are sick,  
 And in your tetchy wantonness as blind,  
 As is the bantling, that of hunger dies,  
 And drives away the nurse. Nor may it be,  
 That he,<sup>1</sup> who in the sacred forum sways,  
 Openly or in secret, shall with him  
 Accordant walk: whom God will not endure  
 I' the holy office long; but thrust him down  
 To Simon Magus, where Alagna's priest<sup>2</sup>  
 Will sink beneath him: such will be his meed."

10-3-1939

## CANTO XXXI

### ARGUMENT

The Poet expatiates further on the glorious vision described in the last Canto. On looking round for Beatrice, he finds that she has left him, and that an old man is at his side. This proves to be St. Bernard, who shows him that Beatrice has returned to her throne, and then points out to him the blessedness of the Virgin Mother.

In fashion, as a snow white rose, lay then  
 Before my view the saintly multitude,<sup>3</sup>  
 Which in His own blood Christ espoused. Meanwhile,  
 That other host,<sup>4</sup> that soar aloft to gaze  
 And celebrate His glory, whom they love,  
 Hover'd around; and, like a troop of bees,  
 Amid the vernal sweets alighting now,  
 Now, clustering, where their fragrant labour glows,  
 Flew downward to the mighty flower, or rose

held the imperial power three years, seven months, and eighteen days, from his first coronation to his death. He was a man wise, and just, and gracious; brave and intrepid in arms; a man of honour and a good catholic; and although by his lineage he was of no great condition, yet he was of a magnanimous heart, much feared and held in awe; and if he had lived longer, would have done the greatest things." G. Villani, lib. ix. cap. i.

<sup>1</sup> *He.*] Pope Clement v. See Canto xxvii. 53. <sup>2</sup> *Alagna's priest.*] Pope Boniface viii. Inferno, Canto xix. 79. <sup>3</sup> *The saintly multitude.*] Human souls, advanced to this state of glory through the mediation of Christ. <sup>4</sup> *That other host.*] The angels.

From the redundant petals, streaming back  
 Unto the stedfast dwelling of their joy.  
 Faces had they of flame, and wings of gold :  
 The rest was whiter than the driven snow ;  
 And, as they flitted down into the flower,  
 From range to range, fanning their plummy loins,  
 Whisper'd the peace and ardour, which they won  
 From that soft winnowing. Shadow none, the vast  
 Interposition of such numerous flight  
 Cast, from above, upon the flower, or view  
 Obstructed aught. For, through the universe,  
 Wherever merited, celestial light  
 Glides freely, and no obstacle prevents.

All there, who reign in safety and in bliss,  
 Ages long past or new, on one sole mark  
 Their love and vision fix'd. O trinal beam  
 Of individual star, that charm'st them thus !  
 Vouchsafe one glance to gild our storm below.<sup>1</sup>

If the grim brood,<sup>2</sup> from Arctic shores that roam'd,  
 (Where Helice <sup>3</sup> for ever, as she wheels,  
 Sparkles a mother's fondness on her son),  
 Stood in mute wonder 'mid the works of Rome,  
 When to their view the Lateran arose  
 In greatness more than earthly ; I, who then  
 From human to divine had past, from time  
 Unto eternity, and out of Florence  
 To justice and to truth, how might I choose  
 But marvel too ? Twixt gladness and amaze,  
 In sooth no will had I to utter aught,  
 Or hear. And, as a pilgrim, when he rests  
 Within the temple of his vow, looks round  
 In breathless awe, and hopes some time to tell  
 Of all its goodly state ; e'en so mine eyes  
 Coursed up and down along the living light,  
 Now low, and now aloft, and now around,  
 Visiting every step. Looks I beheld,

<sup>1</sup> *To gild our storm below.*] To guide us through the dangers to which we are exposed in this tempestuous life. <sup>2</sup> *If the grim brood.*] The northern hordes who invaded Rome. <sup>3</sup> *Helice.*] Callisto, and her son Arcas, changed into the constellations of the Greater Bear and Arctophylax, or Boötes. See Ovid, *Metam. lib. ii. fab. v. vi.*

Where charity in soft persuasion sat ;  
Smiles from within, and radiance from above ;  
And, in each gesture, grace and honour high.

So roved my ken, and in its general form  
All Paradise survey'd : when round I turn'd  
With purpose of my lady to inquire  
Once more of things, that held my thought suspense,  
But answer found from other than I ween'd ;  
For, Beatrice, when I thought to see,  
I saw instead a senior, at my side,  
Robed, as the rest, in glory. Joy benign  
Glow'd in his eye, and o'er his cheek diffused,  
With gestures such as spake a father's love.  
And, " Whither is she vanish'd ? " straight I ask'd.

" By Beatrice summon'd," he replied,  
" I come to aid thy wish. Looking aloft  
To the third circle from the highest, there  
Behold her on the throne, wherein her merit  
Hath placed her." Answering not, mine eyes I raised,  
And saw her, where aloof she sat, her brow  
A wreath reflecting of eternal beams.  
Not from the centre of the sea so far  
Unto the region of the highest thunder,  
As was my ken from hers ; and yet the form  
Came through that medium down, unmix'd and pure.

" O lady ! thou in whom my hopes have rest ;  
Who, for my safety, hast not scorn'd, in hell  
To leave the traces of thy footsteps mark'd ;  
For all mine eyes have seen, I to thy power  
And goodness, virtue owe and grace. Of slave  
Thou hast to freedom brought me : and no means,  
For my deliverance apt, hast left untried.  
Thy liberal bounty still toward me keep :  
That, when my spirit, which thou madest whole,  
Is loosen'd from this body, it may find  
Favour with thee." So I my suit preferr'd :  
And she, so distant, as appear'd, look'd down,  
And smiled ; then towards the eternal fountain turn'd.

And thus the senior, holy and revered :  
" That thou at length mayst happily conclude

Thy voyage (to which end I was dispatch'd,  
 By supplication moved and holy love),  
 Let thy upsoaring vision range, at large,  
 This garden through : for so, by ray divine  
 Kindled, thy ken a higher flight shall mount ;  
 And from heaven's queen, whom fervent I adore,  
 All gracious aid befriend us ; for that I  
 Am her own faithful Bernard." <sup>1</sup> Like a wight,  
 Who haply from Croatia wends to see  
 Our Veronica ; <sup>2</sup> and the while 'tis shown,  
 Hangs over it with never-sated gaze,  
 And, all that he hath heard revolving, saith  
 Unto himself in thought : " And didst Thou look  
 E'en thus, O Jesus, my true Lord and God ?  
 And was this semblance Thine ? " So gazed I then  
 Adoring ; for the charity of him, <sup>3</sup>  
 Who musing, in this world *that* peace enjoy'd,  
 Stood livelily before me. " Child of grace ! "  
 Thus he began : " thou shalt not knowledge gain  
 Of this glad being, if thine eyes are held  
 Still in this depth below. But search around  
 The circles, to the furthest, till thou spy  
 Seated in state, the queen, <sup>4</sup> that of this realm  
 Is sovran." Straight mine eyes I raised ; and bright  
 As, at the birth of morn, the eastern clime  
 Above the horizon, where the sun declines ;  
 So to mine eyes, that upward, as from vale  
 To mountain sped, at the extreme bound, a part  
 Excell'd in lustre all the front opposed.  
 And as the glow burns ruddiest o'er the wave,  
 That waits the ascending team, which Phaëton  
 Ill knew to guide, and on each part the light  
 Diminish'd fades, intensest in the midst ;  
 So burn'd the peaceful oriflamme, <sup>5</sup> and slack'd

<sup>1</sup> *Bernard.*] St. Bernard, the venerable Abbot of Clairvaux, and the great promoter of the second crusade, who died A.D. 1153, in his sixty-third year.

<sup>2</sup> *Our Veronica.*] A copy in miniature of the picture of Christ, which is supposed to have been miraculously imprinted upon a handkerchief preserved in the Church of St. Peter at Rome.

<sup>3</sup> *Him.*] St. Bernard.

<sup>4</sup> *The queen.*] The Virgin Mary.

<sup>5</sup> *Oriflamme.*] Editor's note : The standard of the kings of France, representing a flame on a gold ground.

On every side the living flame decay'd.  
 And in that midst their sportive pennons waved  
 Thousands of angels ; in resplendence each  
 Distinct, and quaint adornment. At their glee  
 And carol, smiled the Lovely One of heaven,  
 That joy was in the eyes of all the blest.

Had I a tongue in eloquence as rich,  
 As is the colouring in fancy's loom,  
 'Twere all too poor to utter the least part  
 Of that enchantment. When he saw mine eyes  
 Intent on her, that charm'd him ; Bernard gazed  
 With so exceeding fondness, as infused  
 Ardour into my breast, unfelt before.

10-10-1939

## CANTO XXXII

### ARGUMENT

St. Bernard shows him, on their several thrones, the other blessed souls, both of the Old and New Testament ; explains to him that these places are assigned them by grace, and not according to merit ; and lastly, tells him that if he would obtain power to descry what remained of the heaven-vision, he must unite with him in supplication to Mary.

FREELY the sage, though wrapt in musings high,  
 Assumed the teacher's part, and mild began :  
 " The wound, that Mary closed, she <sup>1</sup> open'd first,  
 Who sits so beautiful at Mary's feet.  
 The third in order, underneath her, lo !  
 Rachel with Beatrice : Sarah next ;  
 Judith ; Rebecca ; and the gleaner-maid,  
 Meek ancestress <sup>2</sup> of him, who sang the songs  
 Of sore repentance in his sorrowful mood.  
 All, as I name them, down from leaf to leaf,  
 Are, in gradation, throned on the rose.  
 And from the seventh step, successively,  
 Adown the breathing tresses of the flower,  
 Still doth the file of Hebrew dames proceed.

<sup>1</sup> She.] Eve.      <sup>2</sup> Ancestress.] Ruth, the ancestress of David.



For these are a partition wall, whereby  
 The sacred stairs are sever'd, as the faith  
 In Christ divides them. On this part, where blooms  
 Each leaf in full maturity, are set  
 Such as in Christ, or e'er He came, believed.  
 On the other, where an intersected space  
 Yet shows the semicircle void, abide  
 All they, who look'd to Christ already come.  
 And as our Lady on her glorious stool,  
 And they who on their stools beneath her sit,  
 This way distinction make ; e'en so on his,  
 The mighty Baptist, that way marks the line,  
 (He who endured the desert, and the pains  
 Of martyrdom, and, for two years,<sup>1</sup> of hell,  
 Yet still continued holy), and beneath,  
 Augustine ; <sup>2</sup> Francis ; <sup>3</sup> Benedict ; <sup>4</sup> and the rest,  
 Thus far from round to round. So heaven's decree  
 Forecasts, this garden equally to fill,  
 With faith in either view, past or to come.  
 Learn too, that downward from the step, which cleaves,  
 Midway, the twain compartments, none there are  
 Who place obtain for merit of their own,  
 But have through others' merit been advanced,  
 On set conditions ; spirits all released,  
 Ere for themselves they had the power to choose.  
 And, if thou mark and listen to them well,  
 Their childish looks and voice declare as much.

“ Here, silent as thou art, I know thy doubt ;  
 And gladly will I loose the knot, wherein  
 Thy subtile thoughts have bound thee. From this  
 realm

Excluded, chance no entrance here may find ;  
 No more than hunger, thirst, or sorrow can.  
 A law immutable hath stablish'd all ;  
 Nor is there aught thou seest, that doth not fit,  
 Exactly, as the finger to the ring.

<sup>1</sup> *Two years.*] The time that elapsed between the death of the Baptist and his redemption by the death of Christ. <sup>2</sup> *Augustine.*] Bishop of Hippo, in the fourth century ; the celebrated writer who has been mentioned before, Canto x. 117. <sup>3</sup> *Francis.*] See Canto xi. <sup>4</sup> *Benedict.*] See Canto xxii.

It is not, therefore, without cause, that these,  
 O'erspeedy comers to immortal life,  
 Are different in their shares of excellence.  
 Our Sovran Lord, that settlenth this estate  
 In love and in delight so absolute,  
 That wish can dare no further, every soul,  
 Created in His joyous sight to dwell,  
 With grace, at pleasure, variously endows.  
 And for a proof the effect may well suffice.  
 And 'tis moreover most expressly mark'd  
 In holy Scripture,<sup>1</sup> where the twins are said  
 To have struggled in the womb. Therefore, as  
 grace

Inweaves the coronet, so every brow  
 Weareth its proper hue of orient light.  
 And merely in respect to His prime gift,  
 Not in reward of meritorious deed,  
 Hath each his several degree assign'd.  
 In early times with their own innocence  
 More was not wanting, than the parents' faith,  
 To save them : those first ages past, behoved  
 That circumcision in the males should imp  
 The flight of innocent wings : but since the day  
 Of grace hath come, without baptismal rites  
 In Christ accomplish'd, innocence herself  
 Must linger yet below. Now raise thy view  
 Unto the visage most resembling Christ :  
 For, in her splendour only, shalt thou win  
 The power to look on Him." Forthwith I saw  
 Such floods of gladness on her visage shower'd,  
 From holy spirits, winging that profound ;  
 That, whatsoever I had yet beheld,  
 Had not so much suspended me with wonder,  
 Or shown me such similitude of God.  
 And he, who had to her descended, once,

<sup>1</sup> *In holy Scripture.*] "And the children struggled together within her." Gen. xxv. 22. "When Rebekah also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the promise of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth) ; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." Rom. ix. 10-12.

On earth, now hail'd in heaven ; and on poised wing,  
"Ave, Maria, Gratia Plena," sang :  
To whose sweet anthem all the blissful court,  
From all parts answering, rang : that holier joy  
Brooded the deep serene. "Father revered !  
Who deign'st, for me, to quit the pleasant place  
Wherein thou sittest, by eternal lot ;  
Say, who that angel is, that with such glee  
Beholds our queen, and so enamour'd glows  
Of her high beauty, that all fire he seems."

So I again resorted to the lore  
Of my wise teacher, he, whom Mary's charms  
Embellish'd, as the sun the morning star ;  
Who thus in answer spake : "In him are summ'd,  
Whate'er of buxomness and free delight  
May be in spirit, or in angel, met :  
And so beseems : for that he bare the palm  
Down unto Mary, when the Son of God  
Vouchsafed to clothe him in terrestrial weeds.  
Now let thine eyes wait heedful on my words ;  
And note thou of this just and pious realm  
The chiefest nobles. Those, highest in bliss,  
The twain, on each hand next our empress throned,  
Are as it were two roots unto this rose :  
He to the left, the parent, whose rash taste  
Proves bitter to his seed ; and, on the right,  
That ancient father of the holy church,  
Into whose keeping Christ did give the keys  
Of this sweet flower ; near whom behold the seer,<sup>1</sup>  
That, ere he died, saw all the grievous times  
Of the fair bride, who with the lance and nails  
Was won. And, near unto the other, rests  
The leader, under whom, on manna, fed  
The ungrateful nation, fickle and perverse.  
On the other part, facing to Peter, lo !  
Where Anna sits, so well content to look  
On her loved daughter, that with moveless eye  
She chants the loud hosanna : while, opposed  
To the first father of your mortal kind,

<sup>1</sup> *The seer.*] St. John.

Is Lucia,<sup>1</sup> at whose hest thy lady sped,  
When on the edge of ruin closed thine eye.

“ But (for the vision hasteneth to an end)  
Here break we off, as the good workman doth,  
That shapes the cloak according to the cloth ;  
And to the primal love our ken shall rise ;  
That thou mayst penetrate the brightness, far  
As sight can bear thee. Yet, alas ! in sooth  
Beating thy pennons, thinking to advance,  
Thou backward fall'st. Grace then must first be  
gain'd,  
Her grace, whose might can help thee. Thou in prayer  
Seek her : and, with affection, whilst I sue,  
Attend, and yield me all thy heart.” He said ;  
And thus the saintly orison began.

## CANTO XXXIII

### ARGUMENT

St. Bernard supplicates the Virgin Mary that Dante may have grace given him to contemplate the brightness of the Divine Majesty, which is accordingly granted ; and Dante then himself prays to God for ability to show forth some part of the celestial glory in his writings. Lastly, he is admitted to a glimpse of the great mystery ; the Trinity, and the Union of Man with God.

“ O VIRGIN mother, daughter of thy Son !  
Created beings all in lowliness  
Surpassing, as in height above them all ;  
Term by the eternal counsel pre-ordain'd ;  
Ennobler of thy nature, so advanced  
In thee, that its great Maker did not scorn,  
To make Himself His own creation,  
For in thy womb rekindling shone the love  
Reveal'd, whose genial influence makes now  
This flower to germin in eternal peace :  
Here thou to us, of charity and love,  
Art, as the noon-day torch ; and art, beneath,

<sup>1</sup> *Lucia.*] See *Inferno*, Canto ii. 97, and *Purgatorio*, ix. 50.

To mortal men, of hope a living spring.  
So mighty art thou, lady, and so great,  
That he, who grace desireth, and comes not  
To thee for aidance, fain would have desire  
Fly without wings. Not only him, who asks,  
Thy bounty succours ; but doth freely oft  
Forerun the asking. Whatsoe'er may be  
Of excellence in creature, pity mild,  
Relenting mercy, large munificence,  
Are all combined in thee. Here kneeleth one,  
Who of all spirits hath review'd the state,  
From the world's lowest gap unto this height.  
Suppliant to thee he kneels, imploring grace  
For virtue yet more high, to lift his ken  
Toward the bliss supreme. And I, who ne'er  
Coveted sight, more fondly, for myself,  
Than now for him, my prayers to thee prefer,  
(And pray they be not scant), that thou wouldst drive  
Each cloud of his mortality away,  
Through thine own prayers, that on the sovran joy  
Unveil'd he gaze. This yet, I pray thee, Queen,  
Who canst do what thou wilt ; that in him thou  
Wouldst, after all he hath beheld, preserve  
Affection sound, and human passions quell.  
Lo ! where, with Beatrice, many a saint  
Stretch their clasp'd hands, in furtherance of my suit."

The eyes, that heaven with love and awe regards,  
Fix'd on the suitor, witness'd, how benign  
She looks on pious prayers : then fasten'd they  
On the everlasting light, wherein no eye  
Of creature, as may well be thought, so far  
Can travel inward. I, meanwhile, who drew  
Near to the limit, where all wishes end,  
The ardour of my wish (for so behoved)  
Ended within me. Beckoning smiled the sage,  
That I should look aloft : but, ere he bade,  
Already of myself aloft I look'd ;  
For visual strength, refining more and more,  
Bare me into the ray authenthical  
Of sovran light. Thenceforward, what I saw,

Was not for words to speak, nor memory's self  
To stand against such outrage on her skill.

As one, who from a dream awaken'd, straight,  
All he hath seen forgets ; yet still retains  
Impression of the feeling in his dream ;  
E'en such am I : for all the vision dies,  
As 'twere, away ; and yet the sense of sweet,  
That sprang from it, still trickles in my heart.  
Thus in the sun-thaw is the snow unseal'd ;  
Thus in the winds on flitting leaves was lost  
The Sibyl's sentence.<sup>1</sup> O eternal beam !  
(Whose height what reach of mortal thought may  
soar ?)

Yield me again some little particle  
Of what thou then appearedst ; give my tongue  
Power, but to leave one sparkle of thy glory,  
Unto the race to come, that shall not lose  
Thy triumph wholly, if thou waken aught  
Of memory in me, and endure to hear  
The record sound in this unequal strain.

Such keenness from the living ray I met,  
That, if mine eyes had turn'd away, methinks,  
I had been lost ; but, so embolden'd, on  
I pass'd, as I remember, till my view  
Hover'd the brink of dread infinitude.

O grace, unenvying of thy boon ! that gavest  
Boldness to fix so earnestly my ken  
On the everlasting splendour, that I look'd,  
While sight was unconsumed ; and, in that depth,  
Saw in one volume clasp'd of love, whate'er  
The universe unfolds ; all properties<sup>2</sup>  
Of substance and of accident, beheld,  
Compounded, yet one individual light  
The whole. And of such bond methinks I saw  
The universal form ; for that whene'er  
I do but speak of it, my soul dilates

<sup>1</sup> *The Sibyl's sentence.*] Virg., *Æn.* iii. 445.      <sup>2</sup> *All properties.*] Thus in the *Parmenides* of Plato, it is argued that all conceivable quantities and qualities, however contradictory, are necessarily inherent in our idea of a universe or unity.



Beyond her proper self ; and, till I speak,  
 One moment <sup>1</sup> seems a longer lethargy,  
 Than five-and-twenty ages had appear'd  
 To that emprise, that first made Neptune wonder  
 At Argo's shadow <sup>2</sup> darkening on his flood.

With fixed heed, suspense and motionless,  
 Wondering I gazed ; and admiration still  
 Was kindled as I gazed. It may not be,  
 That one, who looks upon that light, can turn  
 To other object, willingly, his view,  
 For all the good, that will may covet, there  
 Is summ'd ; and all, elsewhere defective found,  
 Complete. My tongue shall utter now, no more  
 E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the babe's  
 That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast.  
 Not that the semblance of the living light  
 Was changed (that ever as at first remain'd),  
 But that my vision quickening, in that sole  
 Appearance, still new miracles descried,  
 And toil'd me with the change. In that abyss  
 Of radiance, clear and lofty, seem'd, methought,  
 Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound <sup>3</sup> :  
 And, from another, one reflected seem'd,  
 As rainbow is from rainbow : and the third  
 Seem'd fire, breathed equally from both. O speech !  
 How feeble and how faint art thou, to give  
 Conception birth. Yet this to what I saw  
 Is less than little. O eternal light !

<sup>1</sup> *One moment.*] "A moment seems to me more tedious, than five-and-twenty ages would have appeared to the Argonauts, when they had resolved on their expedition." Lombardi proposes a new interpretation of this difficult passage, and would understand our author to say that one "moment elapsed after the vision, occasioned a greater forgetfulness of what he had seen, than the five-and-twenty centuries, which past between the Argonautic expedition and the time of his writing this poem, had caused oblivion of the circumstances attendant on that event."

<sup>2</sup> *Argo's shadow.*]

Quæ simul ac rostro ventosum proscidit æquor,  
 Tortaque remigio spumis incanduit unda,  
 Emergere feri candenti e gurgite vultus  
 Æquoreæ monstrum Nereides admirantes.

Catullus, De Nupt. Pel. et Thet. 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound.*] The Trinity.

Sole in thyself that dwell'st ; and of thyself  
 Sole understood, past, present, or to come ;  
 Thou smiledst,<sup>1</sup> on that circling,<sup>2</sup> which in thee  
 Seem'd as reflected splendour, while I mused ;  
 For I therein, methought, in its own hue  
 Beheld our image painted : stedfastly  
 I therefore pored upon the view. As one,  
 Who versed in geometric lore, would fain  
 Measure the circle ; and though pondering long  
 And deeply, that beginning, which he needs,  
 Finds not : e'en such was I, intent to scan  
 The novel wonder, and trace out the form,  
 How to the circle fitted, and therein  
 How placed : but the flight was not for my wing ;  
 Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,  
 And, in the spleen, unfolded what it sought.

Here vigour fail'd the towering fantasy :  
 But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel,  
 In even motion, by the love impell'd,  
 That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars.

<sup>1</sup> *Thou smiledst.*] Some MSS. and editions instead of "intendente te a me arridi," have "intendente te ami ed arridi," "who, understanding thyself, lovest and enjoyest thyself"; which Lombardi thinks much preferable. <sup>2</sup> *That circling.*] The second of the circles, "Light of Light," in which he dimly beheld the mystery of the incarnation.

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THE END

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